



THE FRIEND:

In Three Volumes.

VOL. III.

FOURTH EDITION:

With the Author's last Corrections and an Appendix, and
with a Synoptical Table of the Contents
of the Work.

BY HENRY NELSON COLERIDGE, M.A.

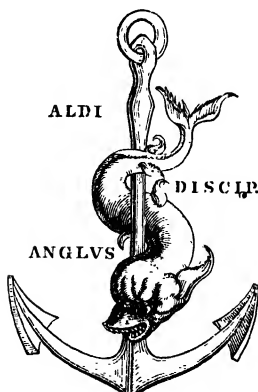
THE FRIEND

A SERIES OF ESSAYS

To aid in the Formation of fixed Principles in Politics,
Morals, and Religion, with Literary
Amusements interspersed :

BY SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE.

VOL III.



LONDON
WILLIAM PICKERING

1850

Now for the writing of this werke,
I, who am a lonesome clerke,
Purposed for to write a book
After the world, that whilome took
Its course in oldè days long passed :
But for men fayn, it is now lassed
In worser plight than it was tho,
I thought me for to touch also
The world which neweth every day—
So as I can, so as I may,
Albeit I sicknes have and pain,
And long have had, yet would I fain
Do my mind's heft and befiness,
That in some part, so as I guesse,
The gentle mind may be advised.

GOWER, *Pro. to the Confess. Amantis.*



THE FRIEND.

INTRODUCTION.

Παρά Σέξτου — τὴν ἔγνωιαν τοῦ κατὰ φύσιν ζῆν, καὶ τὸ σεμνὸν ἀπλάσ-
τως, — ὥς κολακείας μὲν πάσης προσηνεσέραν εἶναι τὴν ὁμιλίαν αὐτοῦ,
αἰδεσιμώτατον δὲ παρ' αὐτὸν ἐκείνον τὸν καιρὸν εἶναι· καὶ ἅμα μὲν ἀπα-
θέσατον εἶναι, ἅμα δὲ φιλοσοργότατον· καὶ τὸ ἰδεῖν ἄνθρωπον σαφῶς
ἐλάχιστον τῶν ἐαυτοῦ καλῶν ἡγούμενον τὴν αὐτοῦ πολυμαθίην.

M. ANTONINUS.*

From Sextus, and from the contemplation of his character, I learned what it was to live a life in harmony with nature; and that seemliness and dignity of deportment, which infused the profoundest reverence at the very same time that his company was more winning than all the flattery in the world. To him I owe likewise that I have known a man at once the most dispassionate, and the most affectionate, and who of all his attractions set the least value on the multiplicity of his literary acquisitions.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE FRIEND.

SIR,



HOPE you will not ascribe to presumption the liberty I take in addressing you on the subject of your work. I feel deeply interested in the cause you have undertaken to support; and my object in

* L. I. 9. But the passage is made up from, rather than found in, Antoninus.—*Ed.*

writing this letter is to describe to you, in part from my own feelings, what I conceive to be the state of many minds, which may derive important advantage from your instructions.

I speak, Sir, of those who, though bred up under our unfavourable system of education, have yet held at times some intercourse with nature, and with those great minds whose works have been moulded by the spirit of nature; who, therefore, when they pass from the seclusion and constraint of early study, bring with them into the new scene of the world much of the pure sensibility which is the spring of all that is greatly good in thought and action. To such the season of that entrance into the world is a season of fearful importance; not for the seduction of its passions, but of its opinions. Whatever be their intellectual powers, unless extraordinary circumstances in their lives have been so favourable to the growth of meditative genius, that their speculative opinions must spring out of their early feelings, their minds are still at the mercy of fortune: they have no inward impulse steadily to propel them: and must trust to the chances of the world for a guide. And such is our present moral and intellectual state, that these chances are little else than variety of danger. There will be a thousand causes conspiring to complete the work of a false education, and by inclosing the mind on every side from the influences of natural feeling, to degrade its inborn dignity, and finally bring the heart itself under subjection to a cor-

rupted understanding. I am anxious to describe to you what I have experienced or seen of the dispositions and feelings that will aid every other cause of danger, and tend to lay the mind open to the infection of all those falsehoods in opinion and sentiment, which constitute the degeneracy of the age.

Though it would not be difficult to prove, that the mind of the country is much enervated since the days of her strength, and brought down from its moral dignity, it is not yet so forlorn of all good,—there is nothing in the face of the times so dark and saddening and repulsive—as to shock the first feelings of a generous spirit, and drive it at once to seek refuge in the elder ages of our greatness. There yet survives so much of the character bred up through long years of liberty, danger, and glory, that even what this age produces bears traces of those that are past, and it still yields enough of beautiful, and splendid, and bold, to captivate an ardent but untutored imagination. And in this real excellence is the beginning of danger: for it is the first spring of that excessive admiration of the age which at last brings down to its own level a mind born above it. If there existed only the general disposition of all who are formed with a high capacity for good, to be rather credulous of excellence than suspiciously and severely just, the error would not be carried far: but there are, to a young mind, in this country and at this time, numerous powerful causes concurring to inflame this disposition, till the excess of the af-

fection above the worth of its object is beyond all computation. To trace these causes it will be necessary to follow the history of a pure and noble mind from the first moment of that critical passage from seclusion to the world, which changes all the circumstances of its intellectual existence, shews it for the first time the real scene of living men, and calls up the new feeling of numerous relations by which it is to be connected with them.

To the young adventurer in life, who enters upon his course with such a mind, every thing seems made for delusion. He comes with a spirit the dearest feelings and highest thoughts of which have sprung up under the influences of nature. He transfers to the realities of life the high wild fancies of visionary boyhood: he brings with him into the world the passions of solitary and untamed imagination, and hopes which he has learned from dreams. Those dreams have been of the great and wonderful and lovely, of all which in these has yet been disclosed to him: his thoughts have dwelt among the wonders of nature, and among the loftiest spirits of men, heroes, and sages, and saints;—those whose deeds, and thoughts, and hopes, were high above ordinary mortality, have been the familiar companions of his soul. To love and to admire has been the joy of his existence. Love and admiration are the pleasures he will demand of the world. For these he has searched eagerly into the ages that are gone; but with more ardent and peremptory expectation he requires

them of that in which his own lot is cast : for to look on life with hopes of happiness is a necessity of his nature, and to him there is no happiness but such as is surrounded with excellence.

See first how this spirit will affect his judgment of moral character, in those with whom chance may connect him in the common relations of life. It is of those with whom he is to live, that his soul first demands this food of her desires. From their conversation, their looks, their actions, their lives, she asks for excellence. To ask from all and to ask in vain, would be too dismal to bear : it would disturb him too deeply with doubt and perplexity and fear. In this hope, and in the revolting of his thoughts from the possibility of disappointment, there is a preparation for self-delusion : there is an unconscious determination that his soul shall be satisfied ; an obstinate will to find good every where. And thus his first study of mankind is a continued effort to read in them the expression of his own feelings. He catches at every uncertain shew and shadowy resemblance of what he seeks ; and unsuspecting in innocence, he is first won with those appearances of good which are in fact only false pretensions. But this error is not carried far : for there is a sort of instinct of rectitude, which, like the pressure of a talisman given to baffle the illusions of enchantment, warns a pure mind against hypocrisy. There is another delusion more difficult to resist and more slowly dissipated. It is when he finds, as he often will, some of the

real features of excellence in the purity of their native form. For then his rapid imagination will gather round them all the kindred features that are wanting to perfect beauty ; and make for him, where he could not find, the moral creature of his expectation ; peopling, even from this human world, his little circle of affection with forms as fair as his heart desired for its love.

But when, from the eminence of life which he has reached, he lifts up his eyes, and sends out his spirit to range over the great scene that is opening before him and around him, the whole prospect of civilized life so wide and so magnificent ;—when he begins to contemplate, in their various stations of power or splendour, the leaders of mankind, those men on whose wisdom are hung the fortunes of nations, those whose genius and valour wield the heroism of a people ;—or those, in no inferior pride of place, whose sway is over the mind of society, chiefs in the realm of imagination, interpreters of the secrets of nature, rulers of human opinion ;—what wonder, when he looks on all this living scene, that his heart should burn with strong affection, that he should feel that his own happiness will be for ever interwoven with the interests of mankind ? Here then the sanguine hope with which he looks on life, will again be blended with his passionate desire of excellence ; and he will still be impelled to single out some, on whom his imagination and his hopes may repose. To whatever department of human thought or action his mind

is turned with interest, either by the sway of public passion or by its own impulse, among statesmen, and warriors, and philosophers, and poets, he will distinguish some favoured names on which he may satisfy his admiration. And there, just as in the little circle of his own acquaintance, seizing eagerly on every merit they possess, he will supply more from his own credulous hope, completing real with imagined excellence, till living men, with all their imperfections, become to him the representatives of his perfect ideal creation ;—till, multiplying his objects of reverence, as he enlarges his prospect of life, he will have surrounded himself with idols of his own hands, and his imagination will seem to discern a glory in the countenance of the age, which is but the reflection of its own effulgence.

He will possess, therefore, in the creative power of generous hope, a preparation for illusory and exaggerated admiration of the age in which he lives : and this predisposition will meet with many favouring circumstances, when he has grown up under a system of education like ours, which (as perhaps all education must that is placed in the hands of a distinct and embodied class, who therefore bring to it the peculiar and hereditary prejudices of their order) has controlled his imagination to a reverence of former times, with an unjust contempt of his own. For no sooner does he break loose from this control, and begin to feel, as he contemplates the world for himself, how much there is surrounding him on all sides, that gratifies his noblest de-

fires, than there 'springs up in him an indignant sense of injustice, both to the age and to his own mind ;' and he is impelled warmly and eagerly to give loose to the feelings that have been held in bondage, to seek out and to delight in finding excellence that will vindicate the insulted world, while it justifies, too, his repentment of his own undue subjection, and exalts the value of his new found liberty.

Add to this, that secluded as he has been from knowledge, and, in the imprisoning circle of one system of ideas, cut off from his share in the thoughts and feelings that are stirring among men, he finds himself, at the first steps of his liberty, in a new intellectual world. Passions and powers which he knew not of start up in his soul. The human mind, which he had seen but under one aspect, now presents to him a thousand unknown and beautiful forms. He sees it, in its varying powers, glancing over nature with restless curiosity, and with impetuous energy striving for ever against the barriers which she has placed around it ; sees it with divine power creating from dark materials living beauty, and fixing all its high and transported fancies in imperishable forms. In the world of knowledge, and science, and art, and genius, he treads as a stranger : in the confusion of new sensations, bewildered in delights, all seems beautiful ; all seems admirable. And therefore he engages eagerly in the pursuit of false or insufficient philosophy ; he is won by the allurements of licentious

art; he follows with wonder the irregular transports of undisciplined imagination. Nor, where the objects of his admiration are worthy, is he yet skilful to distinguish between the acquisitions which the age has made for itself, and that large proportion of its wealth which it has only inherited: but in his delight of discovery and growing knowledge, all that is new to his own mind seems to him new-born to the world. To himself every fresh idea appears instruction; every new exertion, acquisition of power: he seems just called to the consciousness of himself, and to his true place in the intellectual world; and gratitude and reverence towards those to whom he owes this recovery of his dignity, tend much to subject him to the dominion of minds that were not formed by nature to be the leaders of opinion.

All the tumult and glow of thought and imagination, which seize on a mind of power in such a scene, tend irresistibly to bind it by stronger attachment of love and admiration to its own age. And there is one among the new emotions which belong to its entrance on the world, one almost the noblest of all, in which this exaltation of the age is essentially mingled. The faith in the perpetual progression of human nature towards perfection gives birth to such lofty dreams, as secure to it the devout assent of the imagination; and it will be yet more grateful to a heart just opening to hope, flushed with the consciousness of new strength, and exulting in the prospect of destined achieve-

ments. There is, therefore, almost a compulsion on generous and enthusiastic spirits, as they trust that the future shall transcend the present, to believe that the present transcends the past. It is only on an undue love and admiration of their own age that they can build their confidence in the melioration of the human race: Nor is this faith, which, in some shape, will always be the creed of virtue, without apparent reason, even in the erroneous form in which the young adopt it. For there is a perpetual acquisition of knowledge and art, an unceasing progress in many of the modes of exertion of the human mind, a perpetual unfolding of virtues with the changing manners of society: and it is not for a young mind to compare what is gained with what has passed away; to discern that amidst the incessant intellectual activity of the race, the intellectual power of individual minds may be falling off; and that amidst accumulating knowledge lofty science may disappear; and still less, to judge, in the more complicated moral character of a people, what is progression, and what is decline.

Into a mind possessed with this persuasion of the perpetual progress of man, there may even imperceptibly steal both from the belief itself, and from many of the views on which it rests, something like a distrust of the wisdom of great men of former ages, and with the reverence, which no delusion will ever overpower in a pure mind, for their greatness, a fancied discernment of imperfection and of incomplete excellence, which wanted for

its accomplishment the advantages of later improvements : there will be a surprise that so much should have been possible in times so ill prepared ; and even the study of their works may be sometimes rather the curious research of a speculative inquirer, than the devout contemplation of an enthusiast,—the watchful and obedient heart of a disciple listening to the inspiration of his master.

Here then is the power of delusion that will gather round the first steps of a youthful spirit, and throw enchantment over the world in which it is to dwell ;—hope realizing its own dreams ; ignorance dazzled and ravished with sudden sunshine ; power awakened and rejoicing in its own consciousness ; enthusiasm kindling among multiplying images of greatness and beauty, and enamoured, above all, of one splendid error ; and, springing from all these, such a rapture of life and hope, and joy, that the soul, in the power of its happiness, transmutes things essentially repugnant to it, into the excellence of its own nature : these are the spells that cheat the eye of the mind with illusion. It is under these influences that a young man of ardent spirit gives all his love, and reverence, and zeal, to productions of art, to theories of science, to opinions, to systems of feeling, and to characters distinguished in the world, that are far beneath his own original dignity.

Now as this delusion springs not from his worse but his better nature, it seems as if there could be no warning to him from within of his danger : for

even the impassioned joy which he draws at times from the works of nature, and from those of her mightier sons, and which would startle him from a dream of unworthy passion, serves only to fix the infatuation:—for those deep emotions, proving to him that his heart is uncorrupted, justify to him all its workings, and his mind, confiding and delighting in itself, yields to the guidance of its own blind impulses of pleasure. His chance, therefore, of security is the chance that the greater number of objects occurring to attract his honourable passions may be worthy of them. But we have seen that the whole power of circumstances is collected to gather round him such objects and influences as will bend his high passions to unworthy enjoyment. He engages in it with a heart and understanding unspoiled: but they cannot long be misapplied with impunity. They are drawn gradually into closer sympathy with the falsehoods they have adopted, till, his very nature seeming to change under the corruption, there disappears from it the capacity of those higher perceptions and pleasures to which he was born: and he is cast off from the communion of exalted minds, to live and to perish with the age to which he has surrendered himself.

If minds under these circumstances of danger are preserved from decay and overthrow, it can seldom, I think, be to themselves that they owe their deliverance. It must be to a fortunate chance which places them under the influence of some more enlightened mind, from which they may first

gain suspicion and afterwards wisdom. There is a philosophy, which, leading them by the light of their best emotions to the principles which should give life to thought and law to genius, will discover to them in clear and perfect evidence, the falsehood of the errors that have misled them, and restore them to themselves. And this philosophy they will be willing to hear and wise to understand; but they must be led into its mysteries by some guiding hand; for they want the impulse or the power to penetrate of themselves the recesses.

If a superior mind should assume the protection of others just beginning to move among the dangers I have described, it would probably be found, that delusions springing from their own virtuous activity were not the only difficulties to be encountered. Even after suspicion is awakened, the subjection to falsehood may be prolonged and deepened by many weaknesses both of the intellectual and moral nature; weaknesses that will sometimes shake the authority of acknowledged truth. There may be intellectual indolence; an indisposition in the mind to the effort of combining the ideas it actually possesses, and bringing into distinct form the knowledge, which in its elements is already its own: there may be, where the heart resists the sway of opinion, misgivings and modest self-mistrust in him who sees that, if he trusts his heart, he must slight the judgment of all around him:—there may be too habitual yielding to authority, consisting, more than in indolence or diffidence, in a conscious

helplessness and incapacity of the mind to maintain itself in its own place against the weight of general opinion ; and there may be too indiscriminate, too undisciplined, a sympathy with others, which by the mere infection of feeling will subdue the reason. There must be a weakness in dejection to him who thinks with sadness, if his faith be pure, how gross is the error of the multitude, and that multitude how vast ; — a reluctance to embrace a creed that excludes so many whom he loves, so many whom his youth has revered ; — a difficulty to his understanding to believe that those whom he knows to be, in much that is good and honourable, his superiors, can be beneath him in this which is the most important of all ; — a sympathy pleading importunately at his heart to descend to the fellowship of his brothers, and to take their faith and wisdom for his own. How often, when under the impulses of those solemn hours, in which he has felt with clearer insight and deeper faith his sacred truths, he labours to win to his own belief those whom he loves, will he be checked by their indifference or their laughter ! And will he not bear back to his meditations a painful and disheartening sorrow, a gloomy discontent in that faith which takes in but a portion of those whom he wishes to include in all his blessings ? Will he not be enfeebled by a distraction of inconsistent desires, when he feels so strongly that the faith which fills his heart, the circle within which he would embrace all he loves—would repose all his wishes and

hopes, and enjoyments — is yet incommensurate with his affections ?

Even when the mind, strong in reason and just feeling united, and relying on its strength, has attached itself to truth, how much is there in the course and accidents of life that is for ever silently at work for its degradation. There are pleasures deemed harmless, that lay asleep the recollections of innocence : there are pursuits held honourable, or imposed by duty, that oppress the moral spirit : above all there is that perpetual connection with ordinary minds in the common intercourse of society ; that restless activity of frivolous conversation, where men of all characters and all pursuits mixing together, nothing may be talked of that is not of common interest to all ; — nothing, therefore, but those obvious thoughts and feelings that float over the surface of things : and all which is drawn from the depth of nature, all which impassioned feeling has made original in thought, would be misplaced and obtrusive. The talent that is allowed to shew itself is that which can repay admiration by furnishing entertainment : and the display to which it is invited is that which flatters the vulgar pride of society, by abasing what is too high in excellence for its sympathy. A dangerous seduction to talents, which would make language, given to exalt the soul by the fervid expression of its pure emotions, the instrument of its degradation. And even when there is, as in the instance I have supposed, too much uprightness to choose

so dishonourable a triumph, there is a necessity of manners, by which every one must be controlled who mixes much in society, not to offend those with whom he converses by his superiority; and whatever be the native spirit of a mind, it is evident that this perpetual adaptation of itself to others, this watchfulness against its own rising feelings, this studied sympathy with mediocrity, must pollute and impoverish the sources of its strength.

From much of its own weakness, and from all the errors of its misleading activities, may generous youth be rescued by the interposition of an enlightened mind: and in some degree it may be guarded by instruction against the injuries to which it is exposed in the world. His lot is happy who owes this protection to friendship; who has found in a friend the watchful guardian of his mind. He will not be deluded, having that light to guide; he will not slumber with that voice to inspire; he will not be desponding or dejected, with that bosom to lean on. But how many must there be whom Heaven has left unprovided, except in their own strength; who must maintain themselves, unassisted and solitary, against their own infirmities and the opposition of the world! For such there may yet be a protector. If a teacher should stand up in their generation, conspicuous above the multitude in superior power, and still more in the assertion and proclamation of disregarded truth; — to him, to his cheering or summoning voice, all those would turn, whose deep sensibility has been op-

pressed by the indifference, or misled by the seduction, of the times. Of one such teacher who has been given to our own age you have described the power when you said, that in his annunciation of truths he seemed to speak in thunders. I believe that mighty voice has not been poured out in vain; that there are hearts that have received into their inmost depths all its varying tones; and that even now, there are many to whom the name of Wordsworth calls up the recollection of their weakness and the consciousness of their strength.

To give to the reason and eloquence of one man this complete control over the minds of others, it is necessary, I think, that he should be born in their own times. For thus whatever false opinion of preeminence is attached to the age becomes at once a title of reverence to him: and when with distinguished powers he sets himself apart from the age, and above it, as the teacher of high but ill-understood truths, he will appear at once to a generous imagination in the dignity of one whose superior mind outsteps the rapid progress of society, and will derive from illusion itself the power to disperse illusions. It is probable too, that he who labours under the errors I have described, might feel the power of truth in a writer of another age, yet fail in applying the full force of his principles to his own times: but when he receives them from a living teacher, there is no room for doubt or misapplication. It is the errors of his own generation that are denounced; and whatever au-

thority he may acknowledge in the instructions of his master, strikes, with inevitable force, at his veneration for the opinions and characters of his own times. And finally there will be gathered round a living teacher, who speaks to the deeper soul, many feelings of human love that will place the infirmities of the heart peculiarly under his control; at the same time that they blend with and animate the attachment to his cause. So that there will flow from him something of the peculiar influence of a friend: while his doctrines will be embraced and asserted and vindicated with the ardent zeal of a disciple, such as can scarcely be carried back to distant times, or connected with voices that speak only from the grave.

I have done what I proposed. I have related to you as much as I have had opportunities of knowing of the difficulties from within and from without, which may oppose the natural development of true feeling and right opinion in a mind formed with some capacity for good; and the resources which such a mind may derive from an enlightened contemporary writer. If what I have said be just, it is certain that this influence will be felt more particularly in a work, adapted by its mode of publication to address the feelings of the time, and to bring to its readers repeated admonition and repeated consolation.

I have perhaps presumed too far in trespassing on your attention, and in giving way to my own thoughts; but I was unwilling to leave any thing

unfraid which might induce you to consider with favour the request I was anxious to make, in the name of all whose state of mind I have described, that you would at times regard us more particularly in your instructions. I cannot judge to what degree it may be in your power to give the truth you teach a control over understandings that have matured their strength in error; but in our class I am sure you will have docile learners.

MATHESES.*

The Friend might rest satisfied that his exertions thus far have not been wholly unprofitable, if no other proof had been given of their influence, than that of having called forth the foregoing letter, with which he has been so much interested, that he could not deny himself the pleasure of communicating it to his readers. In answer to his correspondent, it need scarcely here be repeated, that one of the main purposes of his work is to weigh, honestly and thoughtfully, the moral worth and intellectual power of the age in which we live; to ascertain our gain and our loss; to determine what we are in ourselves positively, and what we are compared with our ancestors; and thus, and by every other means within his power, to discover what may be hoped for future times, what and how lamentable are the evils to be feared, and how far

* This letter was, as the Editor is informed, the joint composition of the present Professor Wilson and his friend, Mr. Alexander Blair.—*Ed.*

there is cause for fear. If this attempt should not be made wholly in vain, my ingenious correspondent, and all who are in a state of mind resembling that of which he gives so lively a picture, will be enabled more readily and surely to distinguish false from legitimate objects of admiration : and thus may the personal errors which he would guard against be more effectually prevented or removed by the development of general truth for a general purpose, than by instructions specifically adapted to himself or to the class of which he is the able representative. There is a life and spirit in knowledge which we extract from truths scattered for the benefit of all, and which the mind, by its own activity, has appropriated to itself,—a life and spirit, which is seldom found in knowledge communicated by formal and direct precepts, even when they are exalted and endeared by reverence and love for the teacher.

Nevertheless, though I trust that the assistance which my correspondent has done me the honour to request, will in course of time flow naturally from my labours, in a manner that will best serve him, I cannot resist the inclination to connect, at present, with his letter a few remarks of direct application to the subject of it ; remarks, I say,—for to such I shall confine myself,—independent of the main point out of which his complaint and request both proceed ; I mean the assumed inferiority of the present age in moral dignity and intellectual power to those which have preceded it.

For if the fact were true, that we had even surpassed our ancestors in the best of what is good, the main part of the dangers and impediments which my correspondent has feelingly portrayed, could not cease to exist for minds like his, nor indeed would they be much diminished; as they arise out of the constitution of things, from the nature of youth, from the laws that govern the growth of the faculties, and from the necessary condition of the great body of mankind. Let us throw ourselves back to the age of Elizabeth, and call up to mind the heroes, the warriors, the statesmen, the poets, the divines, and the moral philosophers, with which the reign of the virgin queen was illustrated. Or if we be more strongly attracted by the moral purity and greatness, and that sanctity of civil and religious duty, with which the tyranny of Charles I. was struggled against, let us cast our eyes, in the hurry of admiration, round that circle of glorious patriots: but do not let us be persuaded, that each of these, in his course of discipline, was uniformly helped forward by those with whom he associated, or by those whose care it was to direct him. Then, as now, existed objects to which the wisest attached undue importance; then, as now, judgment was misled by factions and parties, time wasted in controversies fruitless, except as far as they quickened the faculties; then, as now, minds were venerated or idolized, which owed their influence to the weakness of their contemporaries rather than to their own power.

Then, though great actions were wrought, and great works in literature and science produced, yet the general taste was capricious, fantastical, or grovelling; and in this point, as in all others, was youth subject to delusion, frequent in proportion to the liveliness of the sensibility, and strong as the strength of the imagination. Every age hath abounded in instances of parents, kindred, and friends, who, by indirect influence of example, or by positive injunction and exhortation, have diverted or discouraged the youth, who, in the simplicity and purity of nature, had determined to follow his intellectual genius through good and through evil, and had devoted himself to knowledge, to the practice of virtue and the preservation of integrity, in slight of temporal rewards. Above all, have not the common duties and cares of common life at all times exposed men to injury from causes the action of which is the more fatal from being silent and unremitting, and which, wherever it was not jealously watched and steadily opposed, must have pressed upon and consumed the diviner spirit?

There are two errors into which we easily slip when thinking of past times. One lies in forgetting in the excellence of what remains the large overbalance of worthlessness that has been swept away. Ranging over the wide tracts of antiquity, the situation of the mind may be likened to that of a traveller* in some unpeopled part of America,

See Ashe's Travels in America.

who is attracted to the burial place of one of the primitive inhabitants. It is conspicuous upon an eminence, "a mount upon a mount!" He digs into it, and finds that it contains the bones of a man of mighty stature; and he is tempted to give way to a belief, that as there were giants in those days, so all men were giants. But a second and wiser thought may suggest to him that this tomb would never have forced itself upon his notice, if it had not contained a body that was distinguished from others, — that of a man who had been selected as a chieftain or ruler for the very reason that he surpassed the rest of his tribe in stature, and who now lies thus conspicuously inhumed upon the mountain-top, while the bones of his followers are laid unobtrusively together in their burrows upon the plain below. The second habitual error is, that in this comparison of ages we divide time merely into past and present, and place these in the balance to be weighed against each other; not considering that the present is in our estimation not more than a period of thirty years, or half a century at most, and that the past is a mighty accumulation of many such periods, perhaps the whole of recorded time, or at least the whole of that portion of it in which our own country has been distinguished. We may illustrate this by the familiar use of the words ancient and modern, when applied to poetry. What can be more inconsiderate or unjust than to compare a few existing writers with the whole succession of their progenitors? The delusion, from the moment that our

thoughts are directed to it, seems too gross to deserve mention ; yet men will talk for hours upon poetry, balancing against each other the words ancient and modern, and be unconscious that they have fallen into it.

These observations are not made as implying a dissent from the belief of my correspondent, that the moral spirit and intellectual powers of this country are declining ; but to guard against unqualified admiration, even in cases where admiration has been rightly fixed, and to prevent that depression which must necessarily follow, where the notion of the peculiar unfavourableness of the present times to dignity of mind has been carried too far. For in proportion as we imagine obstacles to exist out of ourselves to retard our progress, will, in fact, our progress be retarded. Deeming, then, that in all ages an ardent mind will be baffled and led astray in the manner under contemplation, though in various degrees, I shall at present content myself with a few practical and desultory comments upon some of those general causes, to which my correspondent justly attributes the errors in opinion, and the lowering or deadening of sentiment, to which ingenuous and aspiring youth is exposed. And first, for the heart-cheering belief in the perpetual progress of the species towards a point of unattainable perfection. If the present age do indeed transcend the past in what is most beneficial and honourable, he that perceives this, being in no error, has no cause for complaint ; but

if it be not so, a youth of genius might, it should seem, be preserved from any wrong influence of this faith by an insight into a simple truth, namely, that it is not necessary, in order to satisfy the desires of our nature, or to reconcile us to the economy of providence, that there should be at all times a continuous advance in what is of highest worth. In fact it is not, as a writer of the present day has admirably observed, in the power of fiction to portray in words, or of the imagination to conceive in spirit, actions or characters of more exalted virtue, than those which thousands of years ago have existed upon earth, as we know from the records of authentic history. Such is the inherent dignity of human nature, that there belong to it sublimities of virtues which all men may attain, and which no man can transcend : and though this be not true in an equal degree of intellectual power, yet in the persons of Plato, Demosthenes, and Homer, and in those of Shakespeare, Milton, and Lord Bacon, were enshrined as much of the divinity of intellect as the inhabitants of this planet can hope will ever take up its abode among them. But the question is not of the power or worth of individual minds, but of the general moral or intellectual merits of an age, or a people, or of the human race. •Be it so. Let us allow and believe that there is a progress in the species towards unattainable perfection, or whether this be so or not, that it is a necessity of a good and greatly-gifted nature to believe it ; surely it does not follow that

this progress should be constant in those virtues and intellectual qualities, and in those departments of knowledge, which in themselves absolutely considered are of most value, things independent and in their degree indispensable. The progress of the species neither is nor can be like that of a Roman road in a right line. It may be more justly compared to that of a river, which, both in its smaller reaches and larger turnings, is frequently forced back towards its fountains by objects which cannot otherwise be eluded or overcome; yet with an accompanying impulse that will insure its advancement hereafter, it is either gaining strength every hour, or conquering in secret some difficulty, by a labour that contributes as effectually to further it in its course, as when it moves forward uninterrupted in a line, direct as that of the Roman road with which I began the comparison.

It suffices to content the mind, though there may be an apparent stagnation, or a retrograde movement in the species, that something is doing which is necessary to be done, and the effects of which will in due time appear; that something is unremittingly gaining, either in secret preparation or in open and triumphant progress. But in fact here, as every where, we are deceived by creations which the mind is compelled to make for itself; we speak of the species not as an aggregate, but as endued with the form and separate life of an individual. But human kind,—what is it else than myriads of rational beings in various degrees obe-

dient to their reason ; some torpid, some aspiring ; some in eager chase to the right hand, some to the left ; these wasting down their moral nature, and these feeding it for immortality ? A whole generation may appear even to sleep, or may be exasperated with rage,—they that compose it, tearing each other to pieces with more than brutal fury. It is enough for complacency and hope, that scattered and solitary minds are always labouring somewhere in the service of truth and virtue ; and that by the sleep of the multitude the energy of the multitude may be prepared ; and that by the fury of the people the chains of the people may be broken. Happy moment was it for England when her Chaucer, who has rightly been called the morning star of her literature, appeared above the horizon ; when her Wicliffe, like the sun, shot orient beams through the night of Romish superstition ! Yet may the darkness and the desolating hurricane which immediately followed in the wars of York and Lancaster, be deemed in their turn a blessing, with which the land has been visited.

May I return to the thought of progress, of accumulation, of increasing light, or of any other image by which it may please us to represent the improvement of the species ? The hundred years that followed the usurpation of Henry IV., were a hurling-back of the mind of the country, a dilapidation, an extinction ; yet institutions, laws, customs, and habits, were then broken down, which would not have been so readily, nor perhaps so

thoroughly destroyed by the gradual influence of increasing knowledge; and under the oppression of which, if they had continued to exist, the virtue and intellectual prowess of the succeeding century could not have appeared at all, much less could they have displayed themselves with that eager haste, and with those beneficent triumphs, which will to the end of time be looked back upon with admiration and gratitude.

If the foregoing obvious distinctions be once clearly perceived, and steadily kept in view, I do not see why a belief in the progress of human nature towards perfection should dispose a youthful mind, however enthusiastic, to an undue admiration of his own age, and thus tend to degrade that mind.

But let me strike at once at the root of the evil complained of in my correspondent's letter. Protection from any fatal effect of seductions and hindrances which opinion may throw in the way of pure and high-minded youth, can only be obtained with certainty at the same price by which every thing great and good is obtained, namely, steady dependence upon voluntary and self-originating effort, and upon the practice of self-examination, sincerely aimed at and rigorously enforced. But how is this to be expected from youth? Is it not to demand the fruit when the blossom is barely put forth, and is hourly at the mercy of frosts and winds? To expect from youth these virtues and habits, in that degree of excellence to which in

mature years they may be carried, would indeed be preposterous. Yet has youth many helps and aptitudes for the discharge of these difficult duties, which are withdrawn for the most part from the more advanced stages of life. For youth has its own wealth and independence; it is rich in health of body and animal spirits, in its sensibility to the impressions of the natural universe, in the conscious growth of knowledge, in lively sympathy and familiar communion with the generous actions recorded in history, and with the high passions of poetry; and, above all, youth is rich in the possession of time, and the accompanying consciousness of freedom and power. The young man feels that he stands at a distance from the season when his harvest is to be reaped; that he has leisure and may look around, and may defer both the choice and the execution of his purposes. If he makes an attempt and shall fail, new hopes immediately rush in and new promises. Hence, in the happy confidence of his feelings, and in the elasticity of his spirit, neither worldly ambition, nor the love of praise, nor dread of censure, nor the necessity of worldly maintenance, nor any of those causes which tempt or compel the mind habitually to look out of itself for support; neither these, nor the passions of envy, fear, hatred, despondency, and the rankling of disappointed hopes, (all which in after life give birth to, and regulate, the efforts of men and determine their opinions) have power to preside over the choice of the young, if the

disposition be not naturally bad, or the circumstances have not been in an uncommon degree unfavourable.

In contemplation, then, of this disinterested and free condition of the youthful mind, I deem it in many points peculiarly capable of searching into itself, and of profiting by a few simple questions, such as these that follow. Am I chiefly gratified by the exertion of my power from the pure pleasure of intellectual activity, and from the knowledge thereby acquired? In other words, to what degree do I value my faculties and my attainments for their own sakes? or are they chiefly prized by me on account of the distinction which they confer, or the superiority which they give me over others? Am I aware that immediate influence and a general acknowledgment of merit are no necessary adjuncts of a successful adherence to study and meditation in those departments of knowledge which are of most value to mankind;—that a recompense of honours and emoluments is far less to be expected; in fact, that there is little natural connection between them? Have I perceived this truth; and, perceiving it, does the countenance of philosophy continue to appear as bright and beautiful in my eyes?—Has no haze bedimmed it? Has no cloud passed over and hidden from me that look which was before so encouraging? Knowing that it is my duty, and feeling that it is my inclination, to mingle as a social being with my fellow men; prepared also to submit cheerfully to

the necessity that will probably exist of relinquishing, for the purpose of gaining a livelihood, the greatest portion of my time to employments where I shall have little or no choice how or when I am to act ; have I, at this moment, when I stand as it were upon the threshold of the busy world, a clear intuition of that preeminence in which virtue and truth (involving in this latter word the sanctities of religion) sit enthroned above all denominations and dignities which, in various degrees of exaltation, rule over the desires of men ? Do I feel that, if their solemn mandates shall be forgotten, or disregarded, or denied the obedience due to them when opposed to others, I shall not only have lived for no good purpose, but that I shall have sacrificed my birth-right as a rational being ; and that every other acquisition will be a bane and a disgrace to me ? This is not spoken with reference to such sacrifices as present themselves to the youthful imagination in the shape of crimes, acts by which the conscience is violated ; such a thought, I know, would be recoiled from at once, not without indignation ; but I write in the spirit of the ancient fable of Prodicus, representing the choice of Hercules. Here is the World, a female figure approaching at the head of a train of willing or giddy followers : her air and deportment are at once careless, remiss, self-satisfied, and haughty : and there is Intellectual Prowess, with a pale cheek and serene brow, leading in chains Truth, her beautiful and modest captive. The one

makes her salutation with a discourse of ease, pleasure, freedom, and domestic tranquillity ; or, if she invite to labour, it is labour in the busy and beaten tract, with assurance of the complacent regards of parents, friends, and of those with whom we associate. The promise also may be upon her lip of the huzzas of the multitude, of the smile of kings, and the munificent rewards of senates. The other does not venture to hold forth any of these allurements ; she does not conceal from him whom she addresses the impediments, the disappointments, the ignorance and prejudice which her follower will have to encounter, if devoted, when duty calls, to active life ; and if to contemplative, she lays nakedly before him a scheme of solitary and unremitting labour, a life of entire neglect perhaps, or assuredly a life exposed to scorn, insult, persecution, and hatred ; but cheered by encouragement from a grateful few, by applauding conscience, and by a prophetic anticipation, perhaps, of fame — a late, though lasting, consequence. Of these two, each in this manner soliciting you to become her adherent, you doubt not which to prefer ; but oh ! the thought of moment is not preference, but the degree of preference ; the passionate and pure choice, the inward sense of absolute and unchangeable devotion.

I spoke of a few simple questions. The question involved in this deliberation is simple, but at the same time it is high and awful ; and I would gladly know whether an answer can be returned

satisfactory to the mind. We will for a moment suppose that it can not; that there is a startling and a hesitation. Are we then to despond,—to retire from all contest,—and to reconcile ourselves at once to cares without a generous hope, and to efforts in which there is no more moral life than that which is found in the business and labours of the unfavoured and unambitious many? No. But if the inquiry have not been on just grounds satisfactorily answered, we may refer confidently our youth to that nature of which he deems himself an enthusiastic follower, and one who wishes to continue no less faithful and enthusiastic. We would tell him that there are paths which he has not trodden; recesses which he has not penetrated; that there is a beauty which he has not seen, a pathos which he has not felt, a sublimity to which he hath not been raised. If he have trembled because there has occasionally taken place in him a lapse of which he is conscious; if he foresee open or secret attacks, which he has had intimations that he will neither be strong enough to resist, nor watchful enough to elude, let him not hastily ascribe this weakness, this deficiency, and the painful apprehensions accompanying them, in any degree to the virtues or noble qualities with which youth by nature is furnished; but let him first be assured, before he looks about for the means of attaining the insight, the discriminating powers, and the confirmed wisdom of manhood, that his soul has more to demand of the appro-

priate excellencies of youth, than youth has yet supplied to it; that the evil under which he labours is not a superabundance of the instincts and the animating spirit of that age, but a falling short, or a failure. But what can he gain from this admonition? He cannot recall past time; he cannot begin his journey afresh; he cannot untwist the links by which, in no undelightful harmony, images and sentiments are wedded in his mind. Granted that the sacred light of childhood is and must be for him no more than a remembrance. He may, notwithstanding, be remanded to nature, and with trustworthy hopes, founded less upon his sentient than upon his intellectual being; to nature, as leading on insensibly to the society of reason, but to reason and will, as leading back to the wisdom of nature. A re-union, in this order accomplished, will bring reformation and timely support; and the two powers of reason and nature, thus reciprocally teacher and taught, may advance together in a track to which there is no limit.

We have been discoursing (by implication at least) of infancy, childhood, boyhood, and youth, of pleasures lying upon the unfolding intellect plentifully as morning dew-drops,—of knowledge inhaled insensibly like the fragrance,—of dispositions stealing into the spirit like music from unknown quarters,—of images uncalled for and rising up like exhalations,—of hopes plucked like beautiful wild flowers from the ruined tombs that border the highways of antiquity, to make a garland for a

living forehead ;—in a word, we have been treating of nature as a teacher of truth through joy and through gladness, and as a creatress of the faculties by a process of smoothness and delight. We have made no mention of fear, shame, sorrow, nor of ungovernable and vexing thoughts ; because, although these have been and have done mighty service, they are overlooked in that stage of life when youth is passing into manhood—overlooked, or forgotten. We now apply for the succour which we need to a faculty that works after a different course ; that faculty is reason ; she gives more spontaneously, but she seeks for more ; she works by thought through feeling ; yet in thoughts she begins and ends.

A familiar incident may elucidate this contrast in the operations of nature, may render plain the manner in which a process of intellectual improvements, the reverse of that which nature pursues, is by reason introduced. There never perhaps existed a school-boy, who, having, when he retired to rest, carelessly blown out his candle, and having chanced to notice, as he lay upon his bed in the ensuing darkness, the sullen light which had survived the extinguished flame, did not, at some time or other, watch that light as if his mind were bound to it by a spell. It fades and revives, gathers to a point, seems as if it would go out in a moment, again recovers its strength, nay becomes brighter than before : it continues to shine with an endurance, which in its apparent weakness is a mystery ; it

protracts its existence so long, clinging to the power which supports it, that the observer, who had lain down in his bed so easy-minded, becomes sad and melancholy; his sympathies are touched; it is to him an intimation and an image of departing human life; the thought comes nearer to him; it is the life of a venerated parent, of a beloved brother or sister, or of an aged domestic, who are gone to the grave, or whose destiny it soon may be thus to linger, thus to hang upon the last point of mortal existence, thus finally to depart and be seen no more. This is nature teaching seriously and sweetly through the affections, melting the heart, and, through that instinct of tenderness, developing the understanding. In this instance the object of solicitude is the bodily life of another. Let us accompany this same boy to that period between youth and manhood, when a solicitude may be awakened for the moral life of himself. Are there any powers by which, beginning with a sense of inward decay that affects not however the natural life, he could call to mind the same image and hang over it with an equal interest as a visible type of his own perishing spirit? Oh! surely, if the being of the individual be under his own care, if it be his first care, if duty begin from the point of accountability to our conscience, and, through that, to God and human nature; if without such primary sense of duty, all secondary care of teacher, of friend, or parent, must be baseless and fruitless; if, lastly, the motions of the soul transcend in worth those of the

animal functions, nay, give to them their sole value ; then truly are there such powers ; and the image of the dying taper may be recalled and contemplated, though with no sadness in the nerves, no disposition to tears, no unconquerable sighs, yet with a melancholy in the soul, a sinking inward into ourselves from thought to thought, a steady remonstrance, and a high resolve. Let then the youth go back, as occasion will permit, to nature and to solitude, thus admonished by reason, and relying upon this newly acquired support. A world of fresh sensations will gradually open upon him as his mind puts off its infirmities, and as instead of being propelled restlessly towards others in admiration, or too hasty love, he makes it his prime business to understand himself. New sensations, I affirm, will be opened out, pure, and sanctioned by that reason which is their original author ; and precious feelings of disinterested, that is self-disregarding, joy and love may be regenerated and restored ; and, in this sense, he may be said to measure back the track of life he has trodden.

In such disposition of mind let the youth return to the visible universe, and to conversation with ancient books, and to those, if such there be, which in the present day breathe the ancient spirit ; and let him feed upon that beauty which unfolds itself, not to his eye as it sees carelessly the things which cannot possibly go unseen, and are remembered or not as accident shall decide, but to the thinking mind ; which searches, discovers, and treasures up,

infusing by meditation into the objects with which it converses an intellectual life, whereby they remain planted in the memory, now and for ever. Hitherto the youth, I suppose, has been content for the most part to look at his own mind, after the manner in which he ranges along the stars in the firmament with naked unaided sight : let him now apply the telescope of art, to call the invisible stars out of their hiding places ; and let him endeavour to look through the system of his being, with the organ of reason, summoned to penetrate, as far as it has power, in discovery of the impelling forces and the governing laws.

These expectations are not immoderate ; they demand nothing more than the perception of a few plain truths ; namely, that knowledge, efficacious for the production of virtue, is the ultimate end of all effort, the sole dispenser of complacency and repose. A perception also is implied of the inherent superiority of contemplation to action. The Friend does not in this contradict his own words, where he has said heretofore, that ‘doubtless to act is nobler than to think.’* In those words, it was his purpose to censure that barren contemplation, which rests satisfied with itself in cases where the thoughts are of such quality that they may, and ought to, be embodied in action. But he speaks now of the general superiority of thought to action ; as proceeding and governing all action that moves

* Vol. i. p. 158.—*Ed.*

to salutary purposes ; and, secondly, as leading to elevation, the absolute possession of the individual mind, and to a consistency or harmony of the being within itself, which no outward agency can reach to disturb or to impair ; and lastly, as producing works of pure science ; or of the combined faculties of imagination, feeling, and reason ; works which, both from their independence in their origin upon accident, their nature, their duration, and the wide spread of their influence, are entitled rightly to take place of the noblest and most beneficent deeds of heroes, statesmen, legislators, or warriors.

Yet, beginning from the perception of this established superiority, we do not suppose that the youth, whom we wish to guide and encourage, is to be insensible to those influences of wealth, or rank, or station, by which the bulk of mankind are swayed. Our eyes have not been fixed upon virtue which lies apart from human nature, or transcends it. In fact there is no such virtue. We neither suppose nor wish him to undervalue or slight these distinctions as modes of power, things that may enable him to be more useful to his contemporaries ; nor as gratifications that may confer dignity upon his living person, and, through him, upon those who love him ; nor as they may connect his name, through a family to be founded by his success, in a closer chain of gratitude with some portion of posterity, who shall speak of him as among their ancestry, with a more tender interest than the mere

general bond of patriotism or humanity would supply. We suppose no indifference to, much less a contempt of, these rewards; but let them have their due place; let it be ascertained, when the soul is searched into, that they are only an auxiliary motive to exertion, never the principal or originating force. If this be too much to expect from a youth who, I take for granted, possesses no ordinary endowments, and whom circumstances with respect to the more dangerous passions have favoured, then, indeed, must the noble spirit of the country be wasted away; then would our institutions be deplorable, and the education prevalent among us utterly vile and debasing.

But my correspondent, who drew forth these thoughts, has said rightly, that the character of the age may not without injustice be thus branded. He will not deny that, without speaking of other countries, there is in these islands, in the departments of natural philosophy, of mechanic ingenuity, in the general activities of the country, and in the particular excellence of individual minds, in high stations civil or military, enough to excite admiration and love in the sober-minded, and more than enough to intoxicate the youthful and inexperienced. I will compare, then, an aspiring youth, leaving the schools in which he has been disciplined, and preparing to bear a part in the concerns of the world, I will compare him in this season of eager admiration, to a newly-invested knight appearing with his blank unsignalized shield,

upon some day of solemn tournament, at the court of the Faery-queen, as that sovereignty was conceived to exist by the moral and imaginative genius of our divine Spenser. He does not himself immediately enter the lists as a combatant, but he looks round him with a beating heart, dazzled by the gorgeous pageantry, the banners, the impresses, the ladies of overcoming beauty, the persons of the knights, now first seen by him, the fame of whose actions is carried by the traveller, like merchandize, through the world, and resounded upon the harp of the minstrel. But I am not at liberty to make this comparison. If a youth were to begin his career in such an assemblage, with such examples to guide and to animate, it will be pleaded, there would be no cause for apprehension ; he could not falter, he could not be misled. But ours is, notwithstanding its manifold excellences, a degenerate age ; and recreant knights are among us far outnumbering the true. A false Gloriana in these days imposes worthless services, which they who perform them, in their blindness, know not to be such ; and which are recompensed by rewards as worthless, yet eagerly grasped at, as if they were the immortal guerdon of virtue.

I have in this declaration insensibly overstepped the limits which I had determined not to pass : let me be forgiven ; for it is hope which hath carried me forward. In such a mixed assemblage as our age presents, with its genuine merit and its large overbalance of alloy, I may boldly ask into what

errors, either with respect to person or thing, could a young man fall, who had sincerely entered upon the course of moral discipline which has been recommended, and to which the condition of youth, it has been proved, is favourable? His opinions could no where deceive him beyond the point up to which, after a season, he would find that it was salutary for him to have been deceived. For as that man cannot set a right value upon health who has never known sickness, nor feel the blessing of ease who has been through his life a stranger to pain, so can there be no confirmed and passionate love of truth for him who has not experienced the hollowness of error. Range against each other as advocates, oppose as combatants, two several intellects, each strenuously asserting doctrines which he sincerely believes; but the one contending for the worth and beauty of that garment which the other has outgrown and cast away. Mark the superiority, the ease, the dignity, on the side of the more advanced mind, how he overlooks his subject, commands it from centre to circumference, and hath the same thorough knowledge of the tenets which his adversary, with impetuous zeal, but in confusion also, and thrown off his guard at every turn of the argument, is labouring to maintain. If it be a question of the fine arts (poetry for instance) the riper mind not only sees that his opponent is deceived; but, what is of far more importance, sees how he is deceived. The imagination stands before him with all its imperfections laid open; as

duped by shows, enslaved by words, corrupted by mistaken delicacy and false refinement, as not having even attended with care to the reports of the senses, and therefore deficient grossly in the rudiments of its own power. He has noted how, as a supposed necessary condition, the understanding sleeps in order that the fancy may dream. Studied in the history of society, and versed in the secret laws of thought, he can pass regularly through all the gradations, can pierce infallibly all the windings, which false taste through ages has pursued, from the very time when first, through inexperience, heedlessness, or affectation, the imagination took its departure from the side of truth, its original parent. Can a disputant thus accoutred be withstood?—one to whom, further, every movement in the thoughts of his antagonist is revealed by the light of his own experience; who, therefore, sympathizes with weakness gently, and wins his way by forbearance; and hath, when needful, an irresistible power of onset, arising from gratitude to the truth which he vindicates, not merely as a positive good for mankind, but as his own especial rescue and redemption.

I might here conclude: but my correspondent towards the close of his letter, has written so feelingly upon the advantages to be derived, in his estimation, from a living instructor, that I must not leave this part of the subject without a word of direct notice. The Friend cited, some time ago,*

* Vol. i. p. 96.—*Ed.*

a passage from the prose works of Milton, eloquently describing the manner in which good and evil grow up together in the field of the world almost inseparably; and insisting, consequently, upon the knowledge and survey of vice as necessary to the constituting of human virtue, and the scanning of error to the confirmation of truth.

If this be so, and I have been reasoning to the same effect in the preceding paragraph, the fact, and the thoughts which it may suggest, will, if rightly applied, tend to moderate an anxiety for the guidance of a more experienced or superior mind. The advantage, where it is possessed, is far from being an absolute good: nay, such a preceptor, ever at hand, might prove an oppression not to be thrown off, and a fatal hindrance. Grant that in the general tenor of his intercourse with his pupil he is forbearing and circumspect, inasmuch as he is rich in that knowledge (above all other necessary for a teacher) which cannot exist without a liveliness of memory, preserving for him an unbroken image of the winding, excursive, and often retrograde course, along which his own intellect has passed. Grant that, furnished with these distinct remembrances, he wishes that the mind of his pupil should be free to luxuriate in the enjoyments, loves, and admirations appropriated to its age; that he is not in haste to kill what he knows will in due time die of itself; or be transmuted, and put on a nobler form and higher faculties otherwise unattainable. In a word, that the teacher is governed

habitually by the wisdom of patience waiting with pleasure. Yet perceiving how much the outward help of art can facilitate the progress of nature, he may be betrayed into many unnecessary or pernicious mistakes where he deems his interference warranted by substantial experience. And in spite of all his caution, remarks may drop insensibly from him which shall wither in the mind of his pupil a generous sympathy, destroy a sentiment of approbation or dislike, not merely innocent but salutary ; and for the inexperienced disciple how many pleasures may be thus off, what joy, what admiration, and what love ! While in their stead are introduced into the ingenuous mind misgivings, a mistrust of its own evidence, dispositions to affect to feel where there can be no real feeling, indecisive judgments, a superstructure of opinions that has no base to support it, and words uttered by rote with the impertinence of a parrot or a mocking-bird, yet which may not be listened to with the same indifference, as they cannot be heard without some feeling of moral disapprobation.

These results, I contend, whatever may be the benefit to be derived from such an enlightened teacher, are in their degree inevitable. And by this process, humility and docile dispositions may exist towards the master, endued as he is with the power which personal presence confers ; but at the same time they will be liable to overstep their due bounds, and to degenerate into passiveness and prostration of mind. This towards him ; while,

with respect to other living men, nay even to the mighty spirits of past times, there may be associated with such weakness a want of modesty and humility. Insensibly may steal in presumption and a habit of sitting in judgment in cases where no sentiment ought to have existed but diffidence or veneration. Such virtues are the sacred attributes of youth ; its appropriate calling is not to distinguish in the fear of being deceived or degraded, not to analyze with scrupulous minuteness, but to accumulate in genial confidence ; its instinct, its safety, its benefit, its glory, is to love, to admire, to feel, and to labour. Nature has irrevocably decreed, that our prime dependence in all stages of life after infancy and childhood have been passed through (nor do I know that this latter ought to be excepted) must be upon our own minds ; and that the way to knowledge shall be long, difficult, winding, and oftentimes returning upon itself.

What has been said is a mere sketch, and that only of a part of the interesting country into which we have been led ; but my correspondent will be able to enter the paths that have been pointed out. Should he do this and advance steadily for a while, he needs not fear any deviations from the truth which will be finally injurious to him. He will not long have his admiration fixed upon unworthy objects ; he will neither be clogged nor drawn aside by the love of friends or kindred, betraying his understanding through his affections ; he will neither

be bowed down by conventional arrangements of manners producing too often a lifeless decency ; nor will the rock of his spirit wear away in the endless beating of the waves of the world ; neither will that portion of his own time, which he must surrender to labours by which his livelihood is to be earned or his social duties performed, be unprofitable to himself indirectly, while it is directly useful to others ; for that time has been primarily surrendered through an act of obedience to a moral law established by himself, and therefore he moves then also along the orbit of perfect liberty.

Let it be remembered, that the advice requested does not relate to the government of the more dangerous passions, or to the fundamental principles of right and wrong as acknowledged by the universal conscience of mankind. I may therefore assure my youthful correspondent, if he will endeavour to look into himself in the manner which I have exhorted him to do, that in him the wish will be realized, to him in due time the prayer granted, which was uttered by that living teacher of whom he speaks with gratitude as of a benefactor, when in his character of philosophical poet, having thought of morality as implying in its essence voluntary obedience, and producing the effect of order, he transfers in the transport of imagination, the law of moral to physical natures, and having contemplated, through the medium of that order, all modes of existence as subservient to one

spirit, concludes his address to the power of duty in the following words :

To humbler functions, awful power !
I call thee : I myself commend
Unto thy guidance from this hour ;
Oh, let my weakness have an end !
Give unto me, made lowly wise,
The spirit of self-sacrifice ;
The confidence of reason give,
And in the light of truth thy bondman let me live ! *

* This reply to Mathetes was written by Mr. Wordsworth.—*Ed.*





THE FRIEND.

SECTION THE SECOND.

On the Grounds of Morals and Religion, and the
Discipline of the Mind requisite for a true
understanding of the same.



I know, the seeming and self-pleasing wisdom of our times consists much in cavilling and unjustly carping at all things that see light, and that there are many who earnestly hunt after the publike fame of learning and judgment by this easily trod and despicable path, which, notwithstanding, they tread with as much confidence as folly : for that, oftentimes, which they vainly and unjustly brand with opprobrie, outlives their fate, and flourisheth when it is forgot that ever any such as they had being.—*Dedication to Lord Herbert of Ambrose Parey's Works by Thomas Johnson, the Translator, 1634.*



THE FRIEND.

ESSAY I.

We cannot but look up with reverence to the advanced natures of the naturalists and moralists in highest repute amongst us, and wish they had been heightened by a more noble principle, which had crowned all their various sciences with the principal science, and in their brave strayings after truth helpt them to better fortune than only to meet with her handmaids, and kept them from the fate of Ulysses, who wandering through the shades met all the ghosts, yet could not see the queen.—*J. H. (JOHN HALL?) his Motion to the Parliament of England concerning the Advancement of Learning.*

THE preceding section, ending with the second volume, had for its express object the principles of our duty as citizens, or morality as applied to politics. According to his scheme there remained for the Friend first, to treat of the principles of morality generally, and then of those of religion. But since the commencement of this edition,* the question has repeatedly arisen in my mind, whether morality can be said to have any principle

distinguishable from religion, or religion any substance divisible from morality. Or should I attempt to distinguish them by their objects, so that morality were the religion which we owe to things and persons of this life, and religion our morality toward God and the permanent concerns of our own souls, and those of our brethren;—yet it would be evident, that the latter must involve the former, while any pretence to the former without the latter would be as bold a mockery as, if having withholden an estate from the rightful owner, we should seek to appease our conscience by the plea, that we had not failed to bestow alms on him in his beggary. It was never my purpose, and it does not appear the want of the age, to bring together the rules and inducements of worldly prudence. But to substitute these for the laws of reason and conscience, or even to confound them under one name, is a prejudice, say rather a profanation, which I became more and more reluctant to flatter by even an appearance of assent, though it were only in a point of form and technical arrangement.

At a time, when my thoughts were thus employed, I met with a volume of old tracts, published during the interval from the captivity of Charles I. to the restoration of his son. Since my earliest manhood it had been among my fondest regrets, that a more direct and frequent reference had not been made by our historians to the books, pamphlets, and flying sheets of that momentous

period, during which all the possible forms of truth and error (the latter being themselves for the greater part caricatures of truth) bubbled up on the surface of the public mind, as in the ferment of a chaos. It would be difficult to conceive a notion or a fancy, in politics, ethics, theology, or even in physics and physiology, not anticipated by the men of that age;—in this as in most other respects sharply contrasted with the products of the French revolution, which was scarcely more characterized by its sanguinary and sensual abominations than (to borrow the words of an eminent living poet) by

A dreary want at once of books and men.*

The parliament's army was not wholly composed of mere fanatics. There was no mean proportion of enthusiasts; and that enthusiasm must have been of no ordinary grandeur, which could draw from a common soldier, in an address to his comrades, such a dissuasive from acting in the cruel spirit of fear, and such sentiments, as are contained in the following passage, which I would rescue from oblivion,† both for the honour of our forefathers, and in proof of the difference between the repub-

* Wordsworth.

† The more so because every year consumes its quota. The late Sir Wilfred Lawson's predecessor, from some pique or other, left a large and unique collection of the pamphlets published from the commencement of the civil war to the Restoration to his butler, and it supplied the chandlers' and druggists' shops of Penrith and Kendal for many years.

licans of that period, and the democrats, or rather demagogues, of the present. It is as follows :

“ I judge it ten times more honourable for a single person, in witnessing a truth to oppose the world in its power, wisdom and authority, this standing in its full strength, and he singly and nakedly, than fighting many battles by force of arms, and gaining them all. I have no life but truth ; and if truth be advanced by my suffering, then my life also. If truth live, I live ; if justice live, I live ; and these cannot die, but by any man’s suffering for them are enlarged, enthroned. Death cannot hurt me. I sport with him, am above his reach. I live an immortal life. What we have within, that only can we see without. I cannot see death ; and he that hath not this freedom is a slave. He is in the arms of that, the phantom of which he beholdeth and seemeth to himself to flee from. Thus, you see that the king hath a will to redeem his present loss. You see it by means of the lust after power in your own hearts. For my part I condemn his unlawful seeking after it. I condemn his falsehood and indirectness therein. But if he should not endeavour the restoring of the kingliness to the realm, and the dignity of its kings, he were false to his trust, false to the majesty of God that he is intrusted with. The desire of recovering his loss is justifiable. Yea, I should condemn him as unbelieving and pusillanimous, if he should not hope for it. But here is his misery and yours too at present,

that ye are unbelieving and pusillanimous, and are, both alike, pursuing things of hope in the spirit of fear. Thus you condemn the parliament for acknowledging the king's power so far as to seek to him by a treaty; while by taking such pains against him you manifest your own belief that he hath a great power;—which is a wonder, that a prince despoiled of all his authority, naked, a prisoner, destitute of all friends and helps, wholly at the disposal of others, tied and bound too with all obligations that a parliament can imagine to hold him, should yet be such a terror to you, and fright you into such a large remonstrance, and such perilous proceedings to save yourselves from him. Either there is some strange power in him, or you are full of fear that are so affected with a shadow.

“But as you give testimony to his power, so you take a course to advance it; for there is nothing that hath any spark of God in it, but the more it is suppressed, the more it rises. If you did indeed believe, that the original of power were in the people, you would believe likewise that the concessions extorted from the king would rest with you. And, doubtless, such of them as in righteousness ought to have been given would do so, but that your violent courses disturb the natural order of things, in which they still tend to their centre. These courses, therefore, so far from being the way to secure what we have got, are the way to lose them, and (for a time at least) to set up princes in a higher form than ever. For all things by force

compelled from their nature will fly back with the greater earnestness on the removal of that force ; and this, in the present case, must soon weary itself out, and hath no less an enemy in its own satiety than in the disappointment of the people.

“ Again, you speak of the king’s reputation, and do not consider that the more you crush him, the sweeter the fragrance that comes from him. While he suffers, the spirit of God and glory rests upon him. There is a glory and a freshness sparkling in him by suffering, an excellency that was hidden, and which you have drawn out. And naturally men are ready to pity sufferers. When nothing will gain me, affliction will. I confess his sufferings make me a royalist, who never cared for him. He that doth and can suffer shall have my heart ; you had it while you suffered. But now your severe punishment of him for his abuses in government, and your own usurpations, will not only win the hearts of the people to the oppressed suffering king, but provoke them to rage against you, as having robbed them of the interest which they had in his royalty. For the king is in the people, and the people in the king. The king’s being is not solitary, but as he is in union with his people, who are his strength in which he lives ; and the people’s being is not naked, but an interest in the greatness and wisdom of the king who is their honour which lives in them. And though you will disjoin yourselves from kings, God will not, neither will I. God is king of kings, kings’

and princes' God, as well as people's, theirs as well as ours, and theirs eminently (as the speech enforces, God of Israel, that is, Israel's God above all other nations, and so king of kings), by a near and especial kindred and communion. Kingliness agrees with all Christians, who are indeed Christians. For they are themselves of a royal nature, made kings with Christ, and cannot but be friends to it, being of kin to it; and if there were not kings to honour, they would want one of the appointed objects whereon to bestow that fulness of honour which is in their breasts. A virtue would lie unemployed within them, and in prison, pining and restless from the want of its outward correlative. It is a bastard religion, that is inconsistent with the majesty and the greatness of the most splendid monarch. Such spirits are strangers from the kingdom of heaven. Either they know not the glory in which God lives; or they are of narrow minds that are corrupt themselves, and not able to bear greatness, and so think that God will not, or cannot, qualify men for such high places with correspondent and proportionable power and goodness. Is it not enough to have removed the malignant bodies which eclipsed the royal sun, and mixed their bad influences with his, and would you extinguish the sun itself to secure yourselves? O! this is the spirit of bondage to fear, and not of love and a sound mind. To assume the office and the name of champions for the common interest, and of Christ's soldiers, and yet to act for

self-safety is so poor and mean a thing that it must needs produce most vile and absurd actions, the scorn of the old pagans, but for Christians who in all things are to love their neighbour as themselves, and God above both, it is of all affections the unworthiest. Let me be a fool and boast, if so I may shew you, while it is yet time, a little of that rest and security which I and those of the same spirit enjoy, and which you have turned your backs upon; self, like a banished thing, wandering in strange ways. First, then, I fear no party, or interest, for I love all, I am reconciled to all, and therein I find all reconciled to me. I have enmity to none but the son of perdition. It is enmity begets insecurity: and while men live in the flesh, and in enmity to any party, or interest, in a private, divided, and self good, there will be, there cannot but be, perpetual wars; except that one particular should quite ruin all other parts and live alone, which the universal must not, will not, suffer. For to admit a part to devour and absorb the others, were to destroy the whole, which is God's presence therein; and such a mind in any part doth not only fight with another part, but against the whole. Every faction of men, therefore, striving to make themselves absolute, and to owe their safety to their strength, and not to their sympathy, do directly war against God who is love, peace, and a general good, gives being to all and cherishes all, and, therefore, can have neither peace nor security. But we being enlarged into the largeness

of God, and comprehending all things in our bosoms by the divine spirit, are at rest with all, and delight in all; for we know nothing but what is, in its essence, in our own hearts. Kings, nobles, are much beloved of us, because they are in us, of us, one with us, we as Christians being kings and lords by the anointing of God."

But such sentiments, it will be said, are the flights of speculative minds. Be it so; yet to soar is nobler than to creep. We attach, likewise, some value to a thing for its mere infrequency. And speculative minds, alas! have been rare, though not equally rare, in all ages and countries of civilized man. With us the very word seems to have abdicated its legitimate sense. Instead of designating a mind so constituted and disciplined as to find in its own wants and instincts an interest in truths for their truth's sake, it is now used to signify a practical schemer, one who ventures beyond the bounds of experience in the formation and adoption of new ways and means for the attainment of wealth or power. To possess the end in the means, as it is essential to morality in the moral world, and the contra-distinction of goodness from mere prudence, so is it, in the intellectual world, the moral constituent of genius, and that by which true genius is contra-distinguished from mere talent.*

The man of talent, who is, if not exclusively,

* See the note to this essay.—*Ed.*

yet chiefly and characteristically a man of talent, seeks and values the means wholly in relation to some object not therein contained. His means may be peculiar ; but his ends are conventional, and common to the mass of mankind. Alas ! in both cases alike, in that of genius, as well as in that of talent, it too often happens, that this diversity in the quality of their several intellects, extends to the feelings and impulses properly and directly moral, to their dispositions, habits, and maxims of conduct. It characterizes not the intellect alone, but the whole man. The one substitutes prudence for virtue, legality in act and demeanour for warmth and purity of heart, and too frequently becomes jealous, envious, a coveter of other men's good gifts, and a detractor from their merits, openly or secretly, as his fears or his passions chance to preponderate.*

The other, on the contrary, might remind us of

* According to the principles of Spurzheim's cranioscopy (a scheme, the indicative or gnomonic parts of which have a stronger support in facts than the theory in reason or common sense) we should find in the skull of such an individual the organs of circumspection and appropriation disproportionately large and prominent compared with those of ideality and benevolence. It is certain that the organ of appropriation, or (more correctly) the part of the skull asserted to be significant of that tendency and correspondent to the organ, is strikingly large in a cast of the head of the famous Dr. Dodd ; and it was found of equal dimension in a literary man, whose skull puzzled the cranioscopist more than it did me. Nature, it should seem, makes no distinction between manuscripts and money-drafts, though the law does.

the zealots for legitimate succession after the decease of our sixth Edward, who not content with having placed the rightful sovereign on the throne, would wreak their vengeance on "the meek usurper," who had been seated on it by a will against which she had herself been the first to remonstrate. For with that unhealthful preponderance of impulse over motive, which, though no part of genius, is too often its accompaniment, he lives in continued hostility to prudence, or banishes it altogether; and thus deprives virtue of her guide and guardian, her prime functionary, yea, the very organ of her outward life. Hence a benevolence that squanders its shafts and still misses its aim, or resembles the charmed bullet that, levelled at the wolf, brings down the shepherd. Hence desultoriness, extremes, exhaustion—

And thereof cometh in the end despondency and madness! *

Let it not be forgotten, however, that these evils are the disease of the man, while the records of biography furnish ample proof, that genius, in the higher degree, acts as a preservative against them; more remarkably, and in more frequent instances, when the imagination and preconstructive power have taken a scientific or philosophic direction; as in Plato, indeed in almost all the first-rate philosophers, in Kepler, Milton, Boyle, Newton, Leibnitz, and Berkeley. At all events, a certain number

* Wordsworth.

of speculative minds is necessary to a cultivated state of society, as a condition of its progressiveness ; and nature herself has provided against any too great increase in this class of her productions. As the gifted masters of the divining rod to the ordinary miners, and as the miners of a country to the husbandmen, mechanics, and artizans, such is the proportion of the *trismegisti* to the sum total of speculative minds, even of those, I mean, that are truly such ; and of these again, to the remaining mass of useful labourers and operatives in science, literature, and the learned professions.

This train of thought brings to my recollection a conversation with a friend of my youth, an old man of humble estate ; but in whose society I had great pleasure. The reader will, I hope, pardon me if I embrace the opportunity of recalling old affections, afforded me by its fitness to illustrate the present subject. A sedate man he was, and had been a miner from his boyhood. Well did he represent the olden time, when every trade was a mystery and had its own guardian saint ; when the sense of self-importance was gratified at home, and ambition had a hundred several lotteries, in one or other of which every freeman had a ticket, and the only blanks were drawn by sloth, intemperance, or inevitable calamity ; when the detail of each art and trade (like the oracles of the prophets, interpretable in a double sense) was ennobled in the eyes of its professors by being spiritually improved into symbols and mementos of all doctrines and all duties,

and every craftsman had, as it were, two versions of his Bible, one in the common language of the country, another in the acts, objects, and products of his own particular craft. There are not many things in our elder popular literature, more interesting to me than those contests, or eclogues, between workmen for the superior worth and dignity of their several callings, which used to be sold at our village fairs, in stitched sheets, neither untitled nor undecorated, though without the superfluous cost of a separate title-page.

With this good old miner I was once walking through a corn-field at harvest-time, when that part of the conversation, to which I have alluded, took place. "At times," said I, "when you were delving in the bowels of the arid mountain or foodless rock, it must have occurred to your mind as a pleasant thought, that in providing the scythe and the sword you were virtually reaping the harvest and protecting the harvest-man." "Ah!" he replied with a sigh, that gave a fuller meaning to his smile, "out of all earthly things there come both good and evil;—the good through God, and the evil from the evil heart. From the look and weight of the ore I learned to make a near guess, how much iron it would yield; but neither its heft, nor its hues, nor its breakage would prophesy to me, whether it was to become a thievish pick-lock, a murderer's dirk, a slave's collar, or the woodman's axe, the feeding plough-share, the defender's sword, or the mechanic's tool. So, perhaps, my young friend,

I have cause to be thankful, that the opening upon a fresh vein gives me a delight so full as to allow no room for other fancies, and leaves behind it a hope and a love that support me in my labour, even for the labour's sake."

As, according to the eldest philosophy, life being in its own nature aeriform, is under the necessity of renewing itself by inhaling the connatural, and therefore assimilable, air, so is it with the intellectual soul with respect to truth; for it is itself of the nature of truth. Γενομένη ἐκ θεωρίας, καὶ θέαμα θεῶν, φύσιν ἔχειν φιλοθεάμονα ὑπάρχει.* But the occasion and brief history of the decline of true speculative philosophy, with the origin of the separation of ethics from religion, I must defer to the following number.

Note.

As I see many good, and can anticipate no ill, consequences in the attempt to give distinct and appropriate meanings to words hitherto synonymous, or at least of indefinite and fluctuating application, if only the proposed sense be not passed upon the reader as the existing and authorized one, I shall make no other apology for the use of the word, Talent, in this preceding essay and elsewhere in my works than by annexing the following explanation.

I have been in the habit of considering the qua-

* Plotinus. *Ennead.* III. l. 8. f. 3. slightly altered.—*Ed.*

lities of intellect, the comparative eminence in which characterizes individuals and even countries, under four kinds — Genius, Talent, Sense, and Cleverness. The first I use in the sense of most general acceptance, as the faculty which adds to the existing stock of power and knowledge by new views, new combinations; by discoveries not accidental but anticipated, or resulting from anticipation. In short, I define Genius, as originality in intellectual construction; the moral accompaniment, and actuating principle of which consists, perhaps, in the carrying on of the freshness and feelings of childhood into the powers of manhood.

By Talent, on the other hand, I mean the comparative facility of acquiring, arranging, and applying the stock furnished by others and already existing in books or other conservatories of intellect.

By Sense I understand that just balance of the faculties which is to the judgment what health is to the body. The mind seems to act at once and altogether by a synthetic rather than an analytic process: even as the outward senses, from which the metaphor is taken, perceive immediately, each as it were by a peculiar tact or intuition, without any consciousness of the mechanism by which the perception is realized. This is often exemplified in well-bred, unaffected, and innocent women. I know a lady, on whose judgment, from constant experience of its rectitude, I could rely almost as on an oracle. But when she has sometimes pro-

ceeded to a detail of the grounds and reasons for her opinion, then, led by similar experience, I have been tempted to interrupt her with—"I will take your advice," or, "I shall act on your opinion ; for I am sure you are in the right. But as to the *fors* and *because*s, leave them to me to find out. The general accompaniment of sense is a disposition to avoid extremes, whether in theory or in practice, with a desire to remain in sympathy with the general mind of the age or country, and a feeling of the necessity and utility of compromise. If genius be the initiative, and talent the administrative, sense is the conservative, branch in the intellectual republic.

By Cleverness (which I dare not with Dr. Johnson call a low word, while there is a sense to be expressed which it alone expresses) I mean a comparative readiness in the invention and use of means, for the realizing of objects and ideas—often of such ideas, which the man of genius only could have originated, and which the clever man perhaps neither fully comprehends nor adequately appreciates, even at the moment that he is prompting or executing the machinery of their accomplishment. In short, cleverness is a sort of genius for instrumentality. It is the brain in the hand. In literature cleverness is more frequently accompanied by wit, genius and sense by humour.

If I take the three great countries of Europe, in respect of intellectual character, namely, Germany, England, and France, I should characterize

them in the following way ;—premising only that in the first line of the first two tables I mean to imply that genius, rare in all countries, is equal in both of these, the instances equally numerous; not, therefore, contra-distinguishing either from the other, but both from the third country. We can scarcely avoid considering a Cervantes and Calderon as in some sort characteristic of the nation which produced them. In the last war we felt it in the hope, which the recollection of these names inspired. But yet it cannot, equally with the qualities placed as second and third in each table, be called a national characteristic; though, in the appropriation of these likewise, we refer exclusively to the intellectual portion of each country.

GERMANY.

Genius,
Talent,
Fancy.*

ENGLAND.

Genius,
Sense,
Humour.

FRANCE.

Cleverness,
Talent,
Wit.

* The latter chiefly as exhibited in wild combination and in pomp of ornament. Imagination is implied in genius.

So again with regard to the forms and effects, in which the qualities manifest themselves intellectually.

GERMANY.

Idea, or law anticipated,*
Totality, †
Distinctness.

ENGLAND.

Law discovered, ‡
Selection,
Clearness.

FRANCE.

Theory invented,
Particularity, §
Palpability.

* This, as co-ordinate with genius in the first table, applies likewise to the few only; and conjoined with the two following qualities, as more general characteristics of German intellect, includes or supposes, as its consequences and accompaniments, speculation, system, method; which in a somewhat lower class of minds appear as notionality (or a predilection for *noumena*, *mundus intelligibilis*, as contra-distinguished from *phænomena*, or *mundus sensibilis*), scheme, arrangement, orderliness.

† In totality I imply encyclopædic learning, exhaustion of the subjects treated of, and the passion for completion and the love of the complete.

‡ It might have been expressed;—the contemplation of ideas objectively, as existing powers, while the German of equal genius is predisposed to contemplate law subjectively, with anticipation of a correspondent in nature.

§ Tendency to individualize, embody, insulate, as instanced in the advocacy of the vitreous and the resinous fluids instead of the positive and negative forces of the power of electricity. Thus, too, it was not sufficient that oxygen was the principal, and with one exception, the only then

Lastly, we might exhibit the same qualities in their moral, religious, and political manifestations : in the cosmopolitanism of Germany, the contemptuous nationality of the Englishman, and the ostentatious and boastful nationality of the Frenchman. The craving of sympathy marks the German ; inward pride the Englishman ; vanity the Frenchman. So again, enthusiasm, visionariness seems the tendency of the German ; zeal, zealotry of the English ; fanaticism of the French. But the thoughtful reader will find these and many other characteristic points contained in, and deducible from the relations which the mind of the three countries bears to time.

GERMANY.

Past and Future.

ENGLAND.

Past and Present.

FRANCE.

The Present.

known acidifying substance ; the power and principle of acidification must be embodied and as it were impersonated and hypostasized in this gas. Hence the idolism of the French, here expressed in one of its results, namely, palpability. Ideas and a Frenchman are incompatible terms ; but I confine the remark to the period from the latter half of the reign of Louis XIV. Ideas, I say, are here out of the question ; but even the conceptions of a Frenchman ; — whatever he admits to be conceivable must be likewise, according to him, imageable, and the imageable must be fancied tangible — the non-apparency of either or both being accounted for by the disproportion of our senses, not by the nature of the objects.

A whimsical friend of mine, of more genius than discretion, characterizes the Scotchman of literature (confining his remark, however, to the period since the union) as a dull Frenchman and a superficial German. But when I recollect the splendid exceptions of Hume, Robertson, Smollett, Reid, Thompson (if this last instance be not objected to as favouring of geographical pedantry, that truly amiable man and genuine poet having been born but a few furlongs from the English border), Dugald Stewart, Burns, Walter Scott, Hogg and Campbell—not to mention the very numerous physicians and prominent dissenting ministers, born or bred beyond the Tweed;—I hesitate in recording so wild an opinion, which derives its plausibility, chiefly from the circumstance so honourable to our northern sister, that Scotchmen generally have more, and a more learned, education than the same ranks in other countries, below the first class; but in part likewise, from the common mistake of confounding the general character of an emigrant, whose objects are in one place and his best affections in another, with the particular character of a Scotchman: to which we may add, perhaps, the clannish spirit of provincial literature, fostered undoubtedly by the peculiar relations of Scotland, and of which therefore its metropolis may be a striking, but is far from being a solitary, instance.



ESSAY II.

Ἡ ὁδὸς κάτω.

The road downward.

HERACLIT. *Fragment.*

AMOUR *de moi-même, mais bien calculé*—was the motto and maxim of a French philosopher. Our fancy inspirited by the more imaginative powers of hope and fear enables us to present to ourselves the future as the present, and thence to accept a scheme of self-love for a system of morality. And doubtless, an enlightened self-interest would recommend the same course of outward conduct, as the sense of duty would do; even though the motives in the former case had respect to this life exclusively. But to show the desirableness of an object, or the contrary, is one thing; to excite the desire, to constitute the aversion, is another: the one being to the other as a common guide-post to the “chariot instinct with spirit,” which at once directs and conveys; or employing a more familiar image, we may compare the rule of self-interest to a watch with an excellent hour-plate, hand, and regulator, but without its spring and wheel-work. Nay, where its sufficiency and exclusive validity

are adopted as the maxim (*regula maxima*) of morality, it would be a fuller and fairer comparison to say, that the maxim of self-interest stands in a similar relation to the law of conscience or universal selfless reason, as the dial to the sun, which indicates its path by intercepting its radiance.*

But let it be granted, that in certain individuals from a happy evenness of nature, formed into a habit by the strength of education, the influence of example, and by favourable circumstances in general, the actions diverging from self-love as their centre should be precisely the same as those produced from the Christian principle, which requires of us that we should place our self and our neighbour at an equal distance, and love both alike as modes in which we realize and exhibit the love of God above all;—wherein would the difference be then? I answer boldly,—even in that, for which all actions have their whole worth and their main value,—in the agents themselves. So much indeed is this of the very substance of genuine morality, that wherever the latter has given way in the general opinion to a scheme of ethics founded

* Here are two syllogisms, having equivalent practical conclusions, yet not only different, but even contradistinguished. I. It is my duty to love all men: but I am myself a man: *ergo*, it is my duty to love myself equally with others. II. It is my nature to love myself: but I cannot realize this impulse of nature, without acting to others as if I loved them equally with myself: *ergo*, it is my duty to love myself by acting towards others as if I loved them equally with myself. Dec. 1820.

on utility, its place is soon challenged by the spirit of honour. Paley, who degrades the spirit of honour into a mere club-law among the higher classes originating in selfish convenience, and enforced by the penalty of excommunication from the society which habit had rendered indispensable to the happiness of the individuals, has misconstrued it not less than Shaftesbury, who extols it as the noblest influence of noble natures. The spirit of honour is more indeed than a mere conventional substitute for honesty. For to take the word in a sense, which no man of honour would acknowledge, may be allowed to the writer of satires, but not to the moral philosopher. But, on the other hand, instead of being a finer form of moral life, it may be more truly described as the shadow or ghost of virtue deceased. Honour implies a reverence for the invisible and supersensual in our nature, and so far it is virtue; but it is a virtue that neither understands itself nor its true source, and is therefore often unsubstantial, not seldom fantastic, and always more or less capricious. Abstract the notion from the lives of Lord Herbert of Cherbury, or Henry IV. of France; and then compare it with the 1 Cor. xiii. and the epistle to Philemon, or rather with the realization of this fair ideal in the character of St. Paul* himself. I know not a better test. Nor can I think of any investigation,

* This has struck the better class even of infidels. Collins, one of the most learned of our English deists, is said to

that would be more instructive where it would be safe, but none likewise of greater delicacy from the probability of misinterpretation, than a history of the rise of honour in the European monarchies as connected with the corruptions of Christianity, and an inquiry into the specific causes of the inefficacy which has attended the combined efforts of divines and moralists against the practice and obligation of duelling.

have declared, that contradictory as miracles appeared to his reason, he would believe in them notwithstanding, if it could be proved to him that St. Paul had asserted any one as having been worked by himself in the modern sense of the word, miracle; adding, "St. Paul was so perfect a gentleman and a man of honour!" When I call duelling, and similar aberrations of honour, a moral heresy, I refer to the force of the Greek *αἵρεσις*, as signifying a principle or opinion taken up by the will for the will's sake, as a proof and pledge to itself of its own power of self-determination, independent of all other motives. In the gloomy gratification derived or anticipated from the exercise of this awful power, — the condition of all moral good while it is latent and hidden, as it were in the centre, but the essential cause of fiendish guilt, when it makes itself existential and peripheric, *si quando in circumferentiam erumpat*; (in both cases I have purposely adopted the language of the old mystic theosophers) — I find the only explanation of a moral phenomenon not very uncommon in the last moments of condemned felons; namely, the obstinate denial, not of the main guilt, which might be accounted for by ordinary motives, but of some particular act, which had been proved beyond all possibility of doubt, and attested by the criminal's own accomplices and fellow-sufferers in their last confessions; and this too an act, the non-perpetration of which, if believed, could neither mitigate the sentence of the law, nor even the opinions of men after the sentence had been carried into execution.

Of a widely different character from this moral αἵρεσις, yet as a derivative from the same root, we may contemplate the heresies of the Gnostics in the early ages of the church, and of the family of love, with other forms of Antinomianism, since the Reformation to the present day. But lest in uttering truth I should convey falsehood and fall myself into the error which it is my object to expose, it will be requisite to distinguish an apprehension of the whole of a truth, even where that apprehension is dim and indistinct, from a partial perception of the same rashly assumed as a perception of the whole. The first is rendered inevitable in many things for many, in some points for all, men from the progressiveness no less than from the imperfection of humanity, which itself dictates and enforces the precept, Believe that thou mayest understand.* The most knowing must at times be content with the *facit* of a sum too complex or subtle for us to follow nature through the antecedent process. Hence in subjects not under the cognizance of the senses wise men have always attached a high value to general and long-continued assent, as a presumption of truth. After all the subtle reasonings and fair analogies which logic and induction could supply to a mighty intellect, it is yet on this ground that the Socrates of Plato

* The Greek verb, συνιέναι, which we render by the word, understand, is literally the same as our own idiomatic phrase, to go along with.

mainly rests his faith in the immortality of the soul, and the moral government of the universe. *It had been holden by all nations in all ages, but with deepest conviction by the best and wisest men, as a belief connatural with goodness and akin to prophecy.* The same argument is adopted by Cicero, as the principal ground of his adherence to divination. *Gentem quidem nullam video, neque tam humanam atque doctam, neque tam immanem tamque barbaram, quæ non significari futura, et a quibusdam intelligi prædicique posse censeat.** I

* *De Divinat.* Lib. I. f. 1. I find indeed no people or nation, however civilized and cultivated, or however wild and barbarous, who have not deemed that there are antecedent signs of future events, and some men capable of understanding and predicting them.

I am tempted to add a passage from my own translation of Schiller's *Wallenstein*, the more so that the work has been long ago used up, as "winding sheets for pilchards," or extant only by (as I would fain flatter myself) the kind partiality of the trunk-makers: though with exception of works for which public admiration supersedes or includes individual commendations, I scarce remember a book that has been more honoured by the express attestations in its favour of eminent and even of popular *literati*, among whom I take this opportunity of expressing my acknowledgments to the author of *Waverley*, *Guy Mannering*, &c. How (asked Ulysses, addressing his guardian goddess) shall I be able to recognize Proteus in the swallow that skims round our houses, whom I have been accustomed to behold as a swan of Phœbus, measuring his movements to a celestial music? In both alike, she replied, thou canst recognize the god.

So supported, I dare avow that I have thought my translation worthy of a more favourable reception from the public and its literary guides and purveyors. But when I recollect that a much better and very far more valuable work, Mr. Cary's incomparable translation of Dante, had very nearly met with the same fate, I lose all right, and I

confess, I can never read the *De Divinatione* of this great orator, statesman, and patriot, without feeling myself inclined to consider this opinion as an instance of the second class, namely, of fractional truths integrated by fancy, passion, accident, and that preponderance of the positive over the negative in the memory, which makes it no less tenacious of coincidences than forgetful of failures. Still I should not fear to be its advocate under the following limitation: *non nisi de rebus divinis datur divinatio.*

trust, all inclination, to complain;—an inclination, which the mere sense of its folly and uselessness will not always suffice to preclude. (1817.—*Ed.*)

COUNTESS. What dost thou not believe, that oft in dreams A voice of warning speaks prophetic to us?

WALLENSTEIN. There is no doubt that there exist such voices;

Yet I would not call them

Voices of warning, that announce to us

Only the inevitable. As the sun,

Ere it is risen, sometimes paints its image

In the atmosphere, so often do the spirits

Of great events stride on before the events,

And in to-day already walks to-morrow.

That which we read of the Fourth Henry's death

Did ever vex and haunt me, like a tale

Of my own future destiny. 'The king

Felt in his breast the phantom of the knife,

Long ere Ravallac arm'd himself therewith.

His quiet mind forsook him: the phantasma

Started him in his Louvre, chas'd him forth

Into the open air. Like funeral knells

Sounded that coronation festival;

And still with boding sense he heard the tread

Of those feet, that even then were seeking him

Throughout the streets of Paris.

Death of Wallenstein, act v. sc. i.

Poet. Works. III. p. 308.

I am indeed firmly persuaded, that no doctrine was ever widely diffused among various nations through successive ages, and under different religions (such, for instance, as the tenets of original sin and of redemption, those fundamental articles of every known religion professing to have been revealed), which is not founded either in the nature of things, or in the necessities of human nature. Nay, the more strange and irreconcilable such a doctrine may appear to the understanding, the judgments of which are grounded on general rules abstracted from the world of the senses, the stronger is the presumption in its favour. For whatever satirists may say, or sciolists imagine, the human mind has no predilection for absurdity. I would even extend the principle (proportionately I mean) to sundry tenets, that from their strangeness or dangerous tendency appear only to be generally reprobated, as eclipses, in the belief of barbarous tribes, are to be frightened away by noises and execrations; but which rather resemble the luminary itself in this one respect, that after a longer or shorter interval of occultation, they are still found to re-emerge. It is these, the re-appearance of which (*nomine tantum mutato*) from age to age gives to ecclesiastical history a deeper interest than that of romance and scarcely less wild for every philosophic mind. I am far from asserting that such a doctrine (the Antinomian, for instance, or that of a latent mystical sense in the words of Scripture and the works of nature, according to Origen and

Emanuel Swedenborg) shall be always the best possible, or not a distorted and dangerous, as well as partial, representation of the truth on which it is founded. For the same body casts strangely different shadows in different positions and different degrees of light. But I dare, and do, affirm that it always does shadow out some important truth, and from it derives its main influence over the faith of its adherents, obscure as their perception of this truth may be, and though they may themselves attribute their belief to the supernatural gifts of the founder, or the miracles by which his preaching had been accredited. See Wesley's Journal for proofs. But we have the highest possible authority, that of Scripture itself, to justify us in putting the question,—whether miracles can, of themselves, work a true conviction in the mind. There are spiritual truths which must derive their evidence from within, which whoever rejects, *neither will he believe though a man were to rise from the dead to confirm them.* And under the Mosaic law a miracle in attestation of a false doctrine subjected the miracle-worker to death; and whether the miracle was really or only seemingly supernatural, makes no difference in the present argument, its power of convincing, whatever that power may be, whether great or small, depending on the fulness of the belief in its miraculous nature. *Est quibus esse videtur.* Or rather, that I may express the same position in a form less likely to offend, is not a true efficient conviction of a moral truth, is not

the creating of a new heart, which collects the energies of a man's whole being in the focus of the conscience, the one essential miracle, the same and of the same evidence to the ignorant and the learned, which no superior skill can counterfeit, human or demoniacal? Is it not emphatically that leading of the Father, without which no man can come to Christ? Is it not that implication of doctrine in the miracle and of miracle in the doctrine, which is the bridge of communication between the senses and the soul;—that predisposing warmth which renders the understanding susceptible of the specific impression from the historic, and from all other outward, seals of testimony? Is not this the one infallible criterion of miracles, by which a man can know whether they be of God? The abhorrence in which the most savage or barbarous tribes hold witchcraft, in which however their belief is so intense* as even to control the springs of life,—is not this abhorrence of witchcraft under so full a conviction of its reality a proof, how little of divine, how little fitting to our nature, a miracle is, when insulated from spiritual truths, and disconnected from religion as its end? What then can we think of a theological theory, which adopting a scheme of prudential legality, common to it with “the sty of Epicurus,” as far at least as the springs

* I refer the reader to Hearn's Travels among the Copper Indians, and to Bryan Edward's account of the Oby in the West Indies, grounded on judicial documents and personal observation.

of moral action are concerned, makes its whole religion consist in the belief of miracles! As well might the poor African prepare for himself a fetich by plucking out the eyes from the eagle or the lynx, and enshrining the same, worship in them the power of vision. As the tenet of professed Christians (I speak of the principle not of the men, whose hearts will always more or less correct the errors of their understandings) it is even more absurd, and the pretext for such a religion more inconsistent than the religion itself. For they profess to derive from it their whole faith in that futurity, which if they had not previously believed on the evidence of their own consciences, of Moses and the Prophets, they are assured by the great Founder and Object of Christianity, that neither will they believe it, in any spiritual and profitable sense, though a man should rise from the dead.

For myself, I cannot resist the conviction, built on particular and general history, that the extravagancies of Antinomianism and Solifidianism are little more than the counteractions to this Christian paganism;—the play, as it were, of antagonist muscles. The feelings will set up their standard against the understanding, whenever the understanding has renounced its allegiance to the reason: and what is faith, but the personal realization of the reason by its union with the will? If we would drive out the demons of fanaticism from the people, we must begin by exorcising the spirit of Epicureanism in the higher ranks, and restore to

their teachers the true Christian enthusiasm,* the vivifying influences of the altar, the center, and the sacrifice. They must neither be ashamed of, nor disposed to explain away, the articles of prevenient and auxiliary grace, nor the necessity of being born again to the life from which our nature had become apostate.† They must administer indeed the necessary medicines to the sick, the motives of fear as well as of hope; but they must not withhold from them the idea of health, or conceal from them that the medicines for the sick are not the diet of the healthy. Nay, they must make it a part of the curative process to induce the patient, on the first symptoms of recovery, to look forward with prayer and aspiration to that state, in which perfect love shutteth out fear. Above all, they must not seek to make the mysteries of faith what the world calls rational by theories of original sin and redemption borrowed analogically from the imperfection of human law-courts and the coarse contrivances of state expedience.

Among the numerous examples with which I might enforce this warning, I refer, not without

* The original meaning of the Greek, ἐνθουσιασμός is, — the influence of the divinity such as was supposed to take possession of the priest during the performance of the services at the altar.

† Δίξο σὺ ψυχῆς ὀχέτον, ὅθεν ἢ τίνι τάξει
 Σώματι θετεύσας, ἐπὶ τάξιν ἀφ' ἧς ἐρρύσθης
 Ἀλθίς ἀναστήσεις, ἱερῷ λόγῳ ἔργον ἐνίσας.

Zoroastr. Oracula Initio. Edit. Opfopæi. 1599.—Ed.

reluctance, to the most eloquent and one of the most learned of our divines; a rigorist, indeed, concerning the authority of the Church, but a Latitudinarian in the articles of its faith; who stretched the latter almost to the advanced posts of Socinianism, and strained the former to a hazardous conformity with the assumptions of the Roman hierarchy. With what emotions must not a pious mind peruse such passages as the following:—"It (death) reigned upon them whose sins therefore would not be so imputed as Adam's was; because there was no law with an express threatening given to them as was to Adam; but although it was not wholly imputed upon their own account, yet it was imputed upon their's and Adam's: For God was so exasperated with mankind, that being angry he would still continue that punishment to lesser sins and sinners, which he only had first threatened to Adam; and so Adam brought it upon them. * * * * The case is this. Jonathan and Michal were Saul's children. It came to pass, that seven of Saul's issue were to be hanged; all equally innocent, equally culpable.* David took the five sons of Michal, for she had left him unhand somely. Jonathan was his friend, and therefore he spared his son Mephibosheth. Here it was indifferent as to the guilt of the per-

* These two words are added without the least ground in Scripture, according to which (2 Samuel, xxi.) no charge was laid to them but that they were the children of Saul, and sacrificed to a point of state expedience.

sons" (observe, no guilt was attached to either of them) "whether David should take the sons of Michal or of Jonathan; but it is likely that, as upon the kindness which David had to Jonathan, he spared his son, so upon the just provocation of Michal, he made that evil to fall upon them, of which they were otherwise capable; which, it may be, they should not have suffered, if their mother had been kind. Adam was to God, as Michal to David."* And this, with many passages equally gross, occurs in a refutation of the doctrine of original sin, on the ground of its incongruity with reason, and its incompatibility with God's justice! "Exasperated" with those whom the Bishop has elsewhere, in the same treatise, declared to have been "innocent and most unfortunate"—the two things that most conciliate love and pity! Or, if they did not remain innocent, yet, those whose abandonment to a mere nature, while they were subjected to a law above nature, he affirms to be the irresistible cause that they, one and all, did sin;—and this at once illustrated and justified by one of the worst actions of an imperfect mortal! So far could the resolve to coerce all doctrines within the limits of the individual's power of comprehension, and the prejudices of an Arminian against the Calvinist preachers, carry a highly-gifted and exemplary divine. Let us be on our

* Jeremy Taylor's *Doctrine and Practice of Repentance*. c. vi. f. 1.—*Ed.*

guard, lest similar effects should result from the zeal, however well-grounded in some respects, against the Church Calvinists of our days. My own belief is, perhaps, equi-distant from that of both parties, the Grotian and the Genevan. But, confining my remark exclusively to the doctrines and the practical deductions from them, I could never read Bishop Taylor's Tract on the doctrine and practice of Repentance, without being tempted to characterize high Calvinism as (comparatively) a lamb in wolf's skin, and strict Arminianism as approaching to the reverse.

Actuated by these motives, I have devoted the following essay to a brief history of the rise and occasion of the Latitudinarian system in its birth-place in Greece, and to a faithful exhibition both of its parentage and its offspring. The reader will find it strictly correspondent to the motto of both essays, *ἡ ὁδὸς κάτω* — the way downwards.





ESSAY III.

On the Origin and Progress of the Sect of Sophists in Greece.

Ἡ ὁδὸς κάτω

The road downwards.

HERACLIT. *Fragment.*

AS Pythagoras, declining the title of the wise man, is said to have first named himself philosopher, or lover of wisdom, so Protagoras, followed by Gorgias, Prodicus, and others, found even the former word too narrow for his own opinion of himself, and first assumed the title of sophist;—this word originally signifying one who professes the power of making others wise, a wholesale and retail dealer in wisdom;—a wisdom-monger, in the same sense as we say, an iron-monger. In this, and not in their abuse of the arts of reasoning, have Plato and Aristotle placed the essential of the sophistic character. Their sophisms were indeed its natural products and accompaniments, but must yet be distinguished from it, as the fruits from the tree. Ἐμπορός τις—κάπηλος—τὰ μαθήματα περιάγων κατὰ τὰς πόλεις, καὶ πωλοῦντες καὶ καπηλεύοντες—a ven-

der, a market-man, in moral and intellectual knowledges (*connoissances*) — one who hires himself out or puts himself up at auction, as a carpenter and upholsterer to the heads and hearts of his customers—such are the phrases, by which Plato at once describes and satirizes the proper sophist.* Nor does the Stagyrte fall short of his great master and rival in the reprobation of these professors of wisdom, or differ from him in the grounds of it. He too gives the baseness of the motives joined with the impudence and delusive nature of the pretence as the generic character.†

Next to this pretence of selling wisdom and eloquence, they were distinguished by their itinerancy. Athens was, indeed, their great emporium and place of resort, but by no means their domicile. Such were Protagoras, Gorgias, Prodicus, Hippias, Polus, Callicles, Thrasymachus, and a whole host of sophists *minorum gentium*: and though many of the tribe, like the Euthydemus and Dionysodorus, so dramatically portrayed by Plato, were mere empty disputants, sleight-of-word jugglers, this was far from being their common character. Both Plato and Aristotle repeatedly admit the brilliancy of their talents and the extent of their acquirements. The following passage from the *Timæus* of the former

* See the Protagoras, §. 12; and the *καπηλικόν, αὐτοπωλικόν, μαθηματοπωλικόν γένος*, of the Sophistes, §. 21.—*Ed.*

† See Aristot. *De Reprehensione Sophist.* "Ἐστὶ γὰρ ἡ σοφιστικὴ, φαινομένη σοφία· οὕσα δὲ μὴ καὶ ὁ σοφιστὴς, χρηματιστὴς ἀπὸ φαινομένης σοφίας, ἀλλ' οὐκ οὔσης. Ib. c. 2.—*Ed.*

will be my best commentary as well as authority. "The race of sophists, again, I acknowledge for men of no common powers, and of eminent skill and experience in many and various kinds of knowledge, and these too not seldom truly fair and ornamental of our nature; but I fear that somehow, as being itinerants from city to city, loose from all permanent ties of house and home, and everywhere aliens, they shoot wide of the proper aim of man whether as philosopher or as citizen." The few remains of Zeno the Eleatic, his paradoxes against the reality of motion, are mere identical propositions spun out into a sort of whimsical conundrums, as in the celebrated paradox entitled Achilles and the Tortoise, the whole plausibility of which rests on the trick of assuming a *minimum* of time while no *minimum* is allowed to space, joined with that of exacting from *intelligibilia*, νοούμενα, the conditions peculiar to objects of the senses φαινόμενα or αἰσθανόμενα.* The passages still extant from the

* Place a tortoise 20 paces before Achilles, and suppose the fleetness of Achilles to that of the tortoise to be as 20 to 1. Whilst Achilles moves 20 paces, the tortoise moves 1; whilst he moves the 21st pace, she gains the 20th part of the 22nd pace; whilst he gains this 20th part of the 22nd pace, she gains the 20th part of the next 20th part of the same 22nd pace; and so on *in infinitum*. See Aristotle's solution, or attempt at it, in the Physics VI. c. 9, which consists chiefly in applying an infinite divisibility of the moments of time to the assumed infinite divisibility of the parts of matter. Τοῦτο δὲ ἐστὶ ψεύδος· οὐ γὰρ σύγκειται ὁ χρόνος ἐκ τῶν νῦν ὄντων ἀδιαίρετων ὥσπερ οὐδ' ἄλλο μέγεθος οὐδέν.—Ib.

"I had remarked to him," (Mr. Coleridge) says Mr. De Quincey, "that the sophism, as it is usually called, but the

works of Gorgias, on the other hand, want nothing but the form * of a premise to undermine by a legitimate *deductio ad absurdum* all the philosophic systems that had been hitherto advanced with the exception of the Heraclitic, and of that too as it was generally understood and interpreted. Yet Zeno's name was and ever will be holden in reverence by philosophers ; for his object was as grand as his motives were honourable,—that of assigning limits to the claims of the senses, and of subordinating them to the pure reason ; while Gorgias will ever be cited as an instance of prostituted genius from

difficulty, as it should be called, of Achilles and the Tortoise, which had puzzled all the sages of Greece, was, in fact, merely another form of the perplexity which besets decimal fractions ; that, for example, if you throw $\frac{2}{3}$ into a decimal form, it will never terminate, but be .666666, &c. *ad infinitum*. 'Yes,' Coleridge replied ; 'the apparent absurdity in the Grecian problem arises thus,—because it assumes the infinite divisibility of space, but drops out of view the corresponding infinity of time.' There was a flash of lightning, which illuminated a darkness that had existed for twenty-three centuries."—Tait's Mag. Sept. 1834, p. 514.

I apprehend, however, that this part of the solution, such as it is, is substantially what Aristotle means in his remark on the Zenonian paradox ; but the latter part, namely, the detection of the sophism of applying to an idea conditions only properly applicable to sensuous *phænomena*, belongs to Mr. Coleridge himself.—*Ed.* [The solution is given by Leibnitz ; also in a Letter to Mr. Foucher. *Opp. ed. Erdmann*, I. p. 115. S. C.]

* Namely, If either the world itself as an animated whole, according to the Italian school ; or if atoms, according to Democritus ; or any one primal element, as water or fire, according to Thales or Empedocles ; or if a *nous* as explained by Anaxagoras ; be assumed as the absolutely first ; then, &c.

the immoral nature of his object and the baseness of his motives. These and not his sophisms constituted him a sophist, a sophist whose eloquence and logical skill rendered him only the more pernicious.

Soon after the repulse of the Persian invaders, and as a heavy counter-balance to the glories of Marathon and Plataea, we may date the commencement of that corruption first in private and next in public life, which displayed itself more or less in all the free states and communities of Greece, but most of all in Athens. The causes are obvious, and such as in popular republics have always followed, and are themselves the effects of, that passion for military glory and political preponderance, which may well be called the bastard and the parricide of liberty. In reference to the fervid but light and sensitive Athenians, we may enumerate, as the most operative, the giddiness of sudden aggrandisement; the more intimate connection and frequent intercourse with the Asiatic states; the intrigues with the court of Persia; the intoxication of the citizens at large, sustained and increased by the continued allusions to their recent exploits, in the flatteries of the theatre, and the funeral panegyrics; the rage for amusement and public shows; and lastly the destruction of the Athenian constitution by the ascendancy of its democratic element. During the operation of these causes, at an early period of the process, and no unimportant part of it, the sophists made their first appearance. Some of these

applied the lessons of their art in their own persons, and traded for gain and gainful influence in the character of demagogues and public orators; but the greater number offered themselves as instructors, in the arts of persuasion and temporary impression, to as many as could come up to the high prices, at which they rated their services. Νέων πλουσίων θήρα σοφιστική*—(these are Plato's words)—hireling hunters of the young and rich,—they offered to the vanity of youth and the ambition of wealth a substitute for that authority, which by the institutions of Solon had been attached to high birth and property, or rather to the moral discipline, the habits, attainments, and directing motives, on which the great legislator had calculated (not indeed as necessary or constant accompaniments, but yet) as the regular and ordinary results of comparative opulence and renowned ancestry.

The loss of this stable and salutary influence was to be supplied by the arts of popularity. But in order to the success of this scheme, it was necessary that the people themselves should be degraded into a populace. The cupidity for dissipation and sensual pleasure in all ranks had kept pace with the increasing inequality in the means of gratifying it. The restless spirit of republican ambition, engendered by their success in a just war, and by the romantic character of that success, had already formed a close alliance with luxury; with luxury, too, in

* Sophistes, f. 17.—Ed.

its early and most vigorous state, when it acts as an appetite to enkindle, and before it has exhausted and dulled the vital energies by the habit of enjoyment. But this corruption was now to be introduced into the citadel of the moral being, and to be openly defended by the very arms and instruments, which had been given for the purpose of preventing or chastising its approach. The understanding was to be corrupted by the perversion of the reason, and the feelings through the medium of the understanding. For this purpose all fixed principles, whether grounded on reason, religion, law, or antiquity, were to be undermined, and then, as now, chiefly by the sophistry of submitting all positions alike, however heterogeneous, to the criterion of the mere understanding;—the sophists meantime disguising or concealing the fact, that the rules which alone they applied were abstracted from the objects of the senses, and applicable exclusively to things of quantity and relation. At all events, the minds of men were to be sensualized; and even if the arguments themselves failed, yet the principles so attacked were to be brought into doubt by the mere frequency of hearing all things doubted, and the most sacred of all now openly denied, and now insulted by sneer and ridicule. For by the constitution of our nature, as far as it is human nature, so awful is truth, that as long as we have faith in its attainability and hopes of its attainment, there exists no bribe strong enough to tempt us wholly and permanently from our allegiance.

Religion, in its widest sense, signifies the act and habit of reverencing the invisible, as the highest both in ourselves and in nature. To this the senses and their immediate objects are to be made subservient, the one as its organs, the other as its exponents; and as such therefore, having on their own account no true value, because no inherent worth. They are, in short, a language; and taken independently of their representative function, from words they become mere empty sounds, and differ from noise only by exciting expectations which they cannot gratify—fit ingredients of the idolatrous charm, the potent *abracadabra*, of a sophisticated race, who had sacrificed the religion of faith to the superstition of the senses, a race of animals, in whom the presence of reason is manifested solely by the absence of instinct.

The same principle, which in its application to the whole of our being becomes religion, considered speculatively is the basis of metaphysical science, that, namely, which requires an evidence beyond that of sensible concretes, which latter the ancients generalized in the word, *physisca*, and therefore, prefixing the preposition *μετά*, beyond or transcending, named the superior science, metaphysics. The invisible was assumed as the supporter of the apparent, *τῶν φαινομένων*—as their substance, a term which, in any other interpretation, expresses only the striving of the imaginative power under conditions that involve the necessity of its frustration. If the invisible be denied, or (which is equivalent)

considered invisible from the defect of the senses and not in its own nature, the sciences even of observation and experiment lose their essential *copula*. The component parts can never be reduced into an harmonious whole, but must owe their systematic arrangement to the accidents of an ever-shifting perspective. Much more then must this apply to the moral world disjoined from religion. Instead of morality, we can at best have only a scheme of prudence, and this too a prudence fallible and short-sighted: for were it of such a kind as to be *bona fide* coincident with morals in reference to the agent as well as to the outward action, its first act would be that of abjuring its own usurped primacy. By celestial observations alone can even terrestrial charts be constructed scientifically.

The first attempt therefore of the sophists was to separate ethics from the faith in the invisible, and to stab morality through the side of religion; an attempt to which the idolatrous polytheism of Greece furnished too many facilities. To the zeal with which he counteracted this plan by endeavours to purify and ennoble that popular belief, which, from obedience to the laws, he did not deem himself permitted to subvert, Socrates owed his martyr-cup of hemlock. Still while any one principle of morality remained, religion in some form or other must remain inclusively. Therefore, as they commenced by assailing the former through the latter, so did they continue their warfare by reversing the operation. The principle

was confounded with the particular acts, in which under the guidance of the understanding or judgment it was to manifest itself.

Thus the rule of expediency, which properly belonged to one and the lower part of morality, was made to be the whole. And so far there was at least a consistency in this: for in two ways only could it subsist. It must either be the mere servant of religion, or its usurper and substitute. Viewed as principles, they were so utterly heterogeneous, that by no grooving could the two be fitted into each other; by no intermediate could they be preserved in lasting adhesion. The one or the other was sure to decompose the cement. We cannot have a stronger historical authority for the truth of this statement than the words of Polybius, in which he attributes the ruin of the Greek states to the frequency of perjury, which they had learned from the sophists to laugh at as a trifle that broke no bones, nay, as in some cases, an expedient and justifiable exertion of the power given us by nature over our own words, without which no man could have a secret that might not be extorted from him by the will of others. In the same spirit the sage and observant historian attributes the growth and strength of the Roman republic to the general reverence of the invisible powers, and the consequent horror in which the breaking of an oath was holden. This he states as the *causa causarum*, as the ultimate and inclusive cause, of Roman grandeur.

Under such convictions therefore as the sophists

labored with such fatal success to produce, it needed nothing but the excitement of the passions under circumstances of public discord to turn the arguments of expedience and self-love against the whole scheme of morality founded on them, and to procure a favorable hearing for the doctrines, which Plato attributes to the sophist Callicles.* The passage is curious, and might be entitled, a 'Jacobin head, a genuine antique, in high preservation. "By nature," exclaims this Napoleon of old, "the worse off is always the more infamous, that, namely, which suffers wrong; but according to the law it is the doing of wrong. For no man of noble spirit will let himself be wronged: this a slave only endures, who is not worth the life he has, and under injuries and insults can neither help himself nor those that belong to him. Those, who first made the laws, were, in my opinion, feeble creatures, which in fact the greater number of men are; or they would not remain entangled in these spider-webs. Such, however, being the case, laws, honour, and ignominy were all calculated for the advantage of the law-makers. But in order to frighten away the stronger, whom they could not coerce by fair contest, and to secure greater advantages for themselves than their feebleness could otherwise have procured, they preached up the doctrine, that it was base and contrary to

* See the speech of Callicles in the *Gorgias*:—φύσει μὲν γὰρ πᾶν αἰσχρόν ἐστιν ὁ περ καὶ κάκιον, κ. τ. λ.—*Ed.*

right to wish to have anything beyond others ; and that in this wish consisted the essence of injustice. Doubtless it was very agreeable to them, if being creatures of a meaner class they were allowed to share equally with their natural superiors. But nature dictates plainly enough another code of right, namely, that the nobler and stronger should possess more than the weaker and more pusillanimous. Where the power is, there lies the substantial right. The whole realm of animals, nay the human race itself as collected in independent states and nations, demonstrates that the stronger has a right to control the weaker for his own advantage. Assuredly, they have the genuine notion of right, and follow the law of nature, though truly not that which is holden valid in our governments. But the minds of our youths are preached away from them by declamations on the beauty and fitness of letting themselves be mastered, till by these verbal conjurations the noblest nature is tamed and cowed, like a young lion born and bred in a cage. Should a man with full untamed force but once step forward, he would break all your spells and conjurations, trample your contra-natural laws under his feet, vault into the seat of supreme power, and in a splendid style make the right of nature be valid among you."

It would have been well for mankind, if such had always been the language of sophistry. A selfishness, that excludes partnership, all men have an interest in repelling. Yet the principle is the

same : and if for power we substitute pleasure and the means of pleasure, it is easy to construct a *system well fitted to corrupt natures, and the more mischievous in proportion as it is less alarming.* As long as the spirit of philosophy reigns in the learned and highest class, and that of religion in all classes, a tendency to blend and unite will be found in all objects of pursuit, and the whole discipline of mind and manners will be calculated in relation to the worth of the agents. With the prevalence of sophistry, when the pure will (if indeed the existence of a will be admitted in any other sense than as the temporary main current in the wide gust-eddying stream of our desires and aversions)—with this prevalence of sophistry, when the pure will is ranked among the means to an alien end, instead of being itself the one absolute end, in the participation of which all other things are worthy to be called good, commences the epoch of division and separation. Things are rapidly improved, persons as rapidly deteriorated ; and for an indefinite period the powers of the aggregate increase, as the strength of the individual declines. Still, however, sciences may be estranged from philosophy, the practical from the speculative, and one of the two at least may remain. Music may be divided from poetry, and both may continue to exist, though with diminished influence. But religion and morals cannot be disjoined without the destruction of both : and that this does not take place to the full extent, we owe to the

frequency with which both take shelter in the heart, and that men are always better or worse than the maxims which they adopt or concede.

To demonstrate the hollowness of the present system, and to deduce the truth from its sources, is not possible for me without a previous agreement as to the principles of reasoning in general. The attempt could neither be made within the limits of the present work, nor would its success greatly affect the immediate moral interests of the majority of the readers for whom this work was especially written. For as sciences are systems on principles, so in the life of practice is morality a principle without a system. Systems of morality are in truth nothing more than the old books of casuistry generalized, even of that casuistry, which the genius of Protestantism gradually worked off from itself like a heterogeneous humour, together with the practice of auricular confession;—a fact the more striking, because in both instances it was against the intention of the first teachers of the Reformation; and the revival of both was not only urged, but provided for, though in vain, by no less men than Bishops Saunderson and Jeremy Taylor.

But there is yet another prohibitory reason; and this I cannot convey more effectually than in the words of Plato to Dionysius:—

Ἄλλὰ ποῖον τι μὴν τοῦτ' ἐστίν, ὦ παῖ Διονυσίου καὶ Δωρίδος, τὸ ἐρώτημα, ὃ πάντων αἰτίον ἐστὶ κακῶν; μᾶλλον δὲ ἢ περὶ τούτου ὥδ' ἐν τῇ ψυχῇ ἐγγιγνομένη, ἣν εἰ μή τις ἐξαιρεθῇσεται, τῆς ἀληθείας ὄντως οὐ μῆποτε τύχη.*

* *Epist. Dionysio. II.—Ed.*

But what a question is this, which you propose, Oh! son of Dionysius and Doris!—what is the origin and cause of all evil? But rather is the darkness and travail concerning this that thorn in the soul, which unless a man shall have had removed, never can he partake of the truth that is verily and indeed truth.

Yet that I may fulfil the original scope of the Friend, I shall attempt to provide the preparatory steps for such an investigation in the following essays on the principles of method common to all investigations; which I here present, as the basis of my future philosophical and theological writings, and as the necessary introduction to the same. And in addition to this, I can conceive no object of inquiry more appropriate, none which, commencing with the most familiar truths, with facts of hourly experience, and gradually winning its way to positions the most comprehensive and sublime, will more aptly prepare the mind for the reception of specific knowledge, than the full exposition of a principle which is the condition of all intellectual progress, and which may be said even to constitute the science of education, alike in the narrowest and in the most extensive sense of the word. Yet as it is but fair to let the public know beforehand, what the genius of my philosophy is, and in what spirit it will be applied by me, whether in politics, or religion, I conclude with the following brief history of the last hundred and thirty years by a lover of Old England.

Wife and necessitated confirmation and explanation of the law of England, erroneously entitled

The English Revolution of 1688 ; mechanical philosophy, hailed as a kindred movement, and espoused, as a common cause, by the partizans of the revolution in the state.

The consequence is, or was, a system of natural rights instead of social and hereditary privileges ; acquiescence in historic testimony substituted for faith, and yet the true historical feeling, the feeling of being an historical people, generation linked to generation by ancestral reputation, by tradition, by heraldry, — this noble feeling, I say, openly stormed or perilously undermined.

Imagination excluded from poetry, and fancy paramount in physics ; the eclipse of the ideal by the mere shadow of the sensible ; substitution for supposition. *Plebs pro senatu populoque* ; the wealth of nations for the well-being of nations, and of man.

Anglo-mania in France followed by revolution in America ; constitution of America appropriate, perhaps, to America, but elevated from a particular experiment to a universal model. The word constitution altered to mean a capitulation, a treaty, imposed by the people on their own government, as on a conquered enemy ; hence giving sanction to falsehood and universality to anomaly.

Despotism, despotism, despotism, of finance in statistics, of vanity in social converse, of presumption and overweening contempt of the ancients in individuals.

French Revolution ; pauperism, revenue laws,

government by clubs, committees, societies, reviews, and newspapers.

Thus it is that a nation first sets fire to a neighbouring nation ; then catches fire and burns backward.

Statesmen should know that a learned class is an essential element of a state, at least of a Christian state. But you wish for general illumination ! You begin with the attempt to popularize learning and philosophy ; but you will end in the plebification of knowledge. A true philosophy in the learned class is essential to a true religious feeling in all classes.

In fine, religion, true or false, is and ever has been the moral centre of gravity in Christendom, to which all other things must and will accommodate themselves.





ESSAY IV.

Ὁ δὲ μετὰ ταῦτα δίκαιόν ἐστι ποιεῖν, ἀκούε, ἵνα σοι καὶ ἀποκρίνωμαι ὃ σὺ ἐρωτᾷς, πῶς χρὴ ἔχειν ἐμὲ καὶ σὲ πρὸς ἀλλήλους. Εἰ μὲν ὅλως φιλοσοφίας καταπεφρόνηκας, εἴαν χαίρειν· εἰ δὲ παρ' ἑτέρου ἀκήκοας ἢ αὐτὸς βελτίονα εὗρηκας τῶν παρ' ἐμοί, ἐκεῖνα τίμα· εἰ δ' ἄρα τὰ παρ' ἡμῶν σοι ἀρέσκει, τιμητέον καὶ ἐμὲ μάλιστα. PLATO.*

Hear then what are the terms on which you and I ought to stand toward each other. If you hold philosophy altogether in contempt, bid it farewell. Or if you have heard from any other person, or have yourself found out a better than mine, then give honour to that, which ever it be. But if the doctrine taught in these our works please you, then it is but just that you should honour me too in the same proportion.

WHAT is that which first strikes us, and strikes us at once, in a man of education, and which, among educated men, so instantly distinguishes the man of superior mind, that (as was observed with eminent propriety of the late Edmund Burke) “we cannot stand under the same arch-way during a shower of rain, without finding him out?” Not the weight or novelty of his remarks; not any unusual interest of facts communicated by him; for we may suppose both the one and the other pre-

cluded by the shortness of our intercourse, and the triviality of the subjects. The difference will be impressed and felt, though the conversation should be confined to the state of the weather or the pavement. Still less will it arise from any peculiarity in his words and phrases. For if he be, as we now assume, a well-educated man as well as a man of superior powers, he will not fail to follow the golden rule of Julius Cæsar, *insolens verbum, tanquam scopulum, evitare*. Unless where new things necessitate new terms, he will avoid an unusual word as a rock. It must have been among the earliest lessons of his youth, that the breach of this precept, at all times hazardous, becomes ridiculous in the topics of ordinary conversation. There remains but one other point of distinction possible; and this must be, and in fact is, the true cause of the impression made on us. It is the unpremeditated and evidently habitual arrangement of his words, grounded on the habit of foreseeing, in each integral part, or (more plainly) in every sentence, the whole that he then intends to communicate. However irregular and desultory his talk, there is method in the fragments.

Listen, on the other hand, to an ignorant man, though perhaps shrewd and able in his particular calling, whether he be describing or relating. We immediately perceive, that his memory alone is called into action; and that the objects and events recur in the narration in the same order, and with the same accompaniments, however accidental or

impertinent, in which they had first occurred to the narrator. The necessity of taking breath, the efforts of recollection, and the abrupt rectification of its failures, produce all his pauses; and with exception of the "and then," the "and there," and the still less significant, "and so," they constitute likewise all his connections.

Our discussion, however, is confined to method as employed in the formation of the understanding, and in the constructions of science and literature. It would indeed be superfluous to attempt a proof of its importance in the business and economy of active or domestic life. From the cotter's hearth or the workshop of the artizan to the palace or the arsenal, the first merit, that which admits neither substitute nor equivalent, is, that every thing be in its place. Where this charm is wanting, every other merit either loses its name, or becomes an additional ground of accusation and regret. Of one, by whom it is eminently possessed, we say proverbially, he is like clock-work. The resemblance extends beyond the point of regularity, and yet falls short of the truth. Both do, indeed, at once divide and announce the silent and otherwise indistinguishable lapse of time. But the man of methodical industry and honourable pursuits does more; he realizes its ideal divisions, and gives a character and individuality to its moments. If the idle are described as killing time, he may be justly said to call it into life and moral being, while he makes it the distinct object not only of the con-

sciousness, but of the conscience. He organizes the hours, and gives them a soul; and that, the very essence of which is to fleet away, and evermore to have been, he takes up into his own permanence, and communicates to it the imperishableness of a spiritual nature. Of the *good and faithful servant*, whose energies, thus directed, are thus methodized, it is less truly affirmed, that he lives in time, than that time lives in him. His days, months, and years, as the stops and punctual marks in the records of duties performed, will survive the wreck of worlds, and remain extant when time itself shall be no more.

But as the importance of method in the duties of social life is incomparably greater, so are its practical elements proportionably obvious, and such as relate to the will far more than to the understanding. Henceforward, therefore, we contemplate its bearings on the latter.

The difference between the products of a well-disciplined and those of an uncultivated understanding, in relation to what we will now venture to call the science of method, is often and admirably exhibited by our great dramatist. I scarcely need refer my readers to the Clown's evidence, in the first scene of the second act of *Measure for Measure*, or to the Nurse in *Romeo and Juliet*. But not to leave the position, without an instance to illustrate it, I will take the easy-yielding Mrs. Quickly's relation of the circumstances of Sir John Falstaff's debt to her :—

FALSTAFF. What is the grofs fum that I owe thee ?

HOST. Marry, if thou wert an honeft man, thyfelf and the money too. Thou didft fwear to me upon a parcel-gilt goblet, fitting in my Dolphin chamber, at the round table, by a fea-coal fire, upon Wednefday in Whitfun week, when the prince broke thy head for liking his father to a finging-man of Windfor ; thou didft fwear to me then, as I was wafhing thy wound, to marry me and make me my lady thy wife. Canft thou deny it ? Did not goodwife Keech, the butcher's wife, come in then and call me goffip Quickly ?—coming in to borrow a mefs of vinegar ; telling us ſhe had a good diſh of prawns ; whereby thou didft deſire to eat ſome ; whereby I told thee they were ill for a green wound, &c.*

And this, be it obſerved, is ſo far from being carried beyond the bounds of a fair imitation, that the poor ſoul's thoughts and ſentences are more cloſely interlinked than the truth of nature would have required, but that the connections and ſequence, which the habit of method can alone give, have in this inſtance a ſubſtitute in the fuſion of paſſion. For the abſence of method, which characterizes the uneducated, is occaſioned by an habitual ſubmiſſion of the underſtanding to mere events and images as ſuch, and independent of any power in the mind to claſſify or appropriate them. The general accompaniments of time and place are the only relations which perſons of this claſs appear to regard in their ſtatements. As this conſtitutes their leading feature, the contrary excellence, as diſtinguiſhing the well-educated man, muſt be referred to the contrary habit. Method,

therefore, becomes natural to the mind which has been accustomed to contemplate not things only, or for their own sake alone, but likewise and chiefly the relations of things, either their relations to each other, or to the observer, or to the state and apprehension of the hearers. To enumerate and analyze these relations, with the conditions under which alone they are discoverable, is to teach the science of method.

The enviable results of this science, when knowledge has been ripened into those habits which at once secure and evince its possession, can scarcely be exhibited more forcibly as well as more pleasingly, than by contrasting with the former extract from Shakespeare the narration given by Hamlet to Horatio of the occurrences during his proposed transportation to England, and the events that interrupted his voyage :—

HAM. Sir, in my heart there was a kind of fighting
That would not let me sleep : methought, I lay
Worse than the mutines in the bilboes. Rashly,
And praised be rashness for it—Let us know,
Our indiscretion sometimes serves us well,
When our deep plots do fail : and that should teach us,
There's a divinity that shapes our ends,
Rough-hew them how we will.

HOR. That is most certain.

HAM. Up from my cabin,
My sea-gown scarf'd about me, in the dark
Grop'd I to find out them ; had my desire ;
Finger'd their packet ; and, in fine, withdrew
To my own room again : making so bold,
My fears forgetting manners, to unseal
Their grand commission ; where I found, Horatio,
A royal knavery ; an exact command—
Larded with many several sorts of reasons,

Importing Denmark's health, and England's too,
With, ho! such bugs and goblins in my life—
That on the supervise, no leisure bated,
No, not to stay the grinding of the axe,
My head should be struck off!

HOR. Is't possible?

HAM. Here's the commission;—read it at more leisure.*

Here the events, with the circumstances of time and place, are all stated with equal compression and rapidity, not one introduced which could have been omitted without injury to the intelligibility of the whole process. If any tendency is discoverable, as far as the mere facts are in question, it is the tendency to omission: and, accordingly, the reader will observe in the following quotation that the attention of the narrator is called back to one material circumstance, which he was hurrying by, by a direct question from the friend to whom the story is communicated, "How was this sealed?" But by a trait which is indeed peculiarly characteristic of Hamlet's mind, ever disposed to generalize, and meditative if to excess (but which, with due abatement and reduction, is distinctive of every powerful and methodizing intellect,) all the digressions and enlargements consist of reflections, truths, and principles of general and permanent interest, either directly expressed or disguised in playful satire.

- I sat me down;
Devis'd a new commission; wrote it fair.

I once did hold it, as our statists do,
 A baseness to write fair, and laboured much
 How to forget that learning; but, sir, now
 It did me yeoman's service. Wilt thou know
 The effect of what I wrote?

HOR. Ay, good my lord.

HAM. An earnest conjuration from the king,—
 As England was his faithful tributary;
 As love between them, like the palm, might flourish;
 As peace should still her wheaten garland wear,
 And stand a comma 'tween their amities,
 And many such like ascs of great charge—
 That on the view and knowing of these contents,
 Without debatement further, more or less,
 He should the bearers put to sudden death,
 No thriving time allowed.

HOR. How was this seal'd?

HAM. Why, even in that was heaven ordant.
 I had my father's signet in my purse,
 Which was the model of that Danish seal:
 Folded the writ up in the form of the other;
 Subscribed it; gave't the impresson; placed it safely,
 The changeling never known. Now, the next day
 Was our sea-fight; and what to this was sequent,
 Thou know'st already.

HOR. So Guildenstern and Rosencrantz go to't?

HAM. Why, man, they did make love to this employment.
 They are not near my conscience: their defeat
 Doth by their own insinuation grow.
 'Tis dangerous when the baser nature comes
 Between the pass and fell incensed points
 Of mighty opposites.*

It would, perhaps, be sufficient to remark of the
 preceding passage, in connection with the humorous
 specimen of narration,

Fermenting o'er with frothy circumstance,
 in Henry IV., that if, overlooking the different

value of the matter in each, we considered the form alone, we should find both immethodical,—Hamlet from the excess, Mrs. Quickly from the want, of reflection and generalization ; and that method, therefore, must result from the due mean or balance between our passive impressions and the mind's own re-action on the same. Whether this re-action do not suppose or imply a primary act positively originating in the mind itself, and prior to the object in order of nature, though co-instantaneous with it in its manifestation, will be hereafter discussed. But I had a further purpose in thus contrasting these extracts from our myriad-minded bard, *μυριονοῦς ἄνθρωπος*. I wished to bring forward, each for itself, these two elements of method, or, to adopt an arithmetical term, its two main factors.

Instances of the want of generalization are of no rare occurrence in real life : and the narrations of Shakespeare's Hostess and the Tapster differ from those of the ignorant and unthinking in general by their superior humour, the poet's own gift and infusion, not by their want of method, which is not greater than we often meet with in that class, of which they are the dramatic representatives. Instances of the opposite fault, arising from the excess of generalization and reflection in minds of the opposite class, will, like the minds themselves, occur less frequently in the course of our own personal experience. Yet they will not have been wanting to our readers, nor will they have passed unobserved, though the great poet himself (*ὁ τὴν ἑαυτοῦ ψυχὴν*

ᾧσει ὕλην τινὰ ἀσώματον μορφαῖς ποικιλαῖς μορφώσας*) has more conveniently supplied the illustrations. To complete, therefore, the purpose aforementioned, that of presenting each of the two components as separately as possible, I chose an instance in which, by the surplus of its own activity, Hamlet's mind disturbs the arrangement, of which that very activity had been the cause and impulse.†

Thus exuberance of mind, on the one hand, interferes with the forms of method ; but sterility of mind, on the other, wanting the spring and impulse to mental action, is wholly destructive of method itself. For in attending too exclusively to the relations which the past or passing events and objects bear to general truth, and the moods of his own thought, the most intelligent man is sometimes in danger of overlooking that other relation, in which they are likewise to be placed to the apprehension and sympathies of his hearers. His discourse appears like soliloquy intermixed with dialogue. But the uneducated and unreflecting talker overlooks all mental relations, both logical and psychological ; and consequently precludes all method which is not purely accidental. Hence the nearer the things and incidents in time and place, the more distant, disjointed, and impertinent to each other, and to any common purpose, will they appear in his nar-

* He that moulded his own soul, as some incorporeal material, into various forms.—THEMISTIUS.

† See the criticism on the character of Hamlet in the Literary Remains, vol. ii. p. 202.—*Ed.*

ration : and this from the want of a staple, or starting-post, in the narrator himself ; from the absence of the leading thought, which, borrowing a phrase from the nomenclature of legislation, I may not inaptly call the initiative. On the contrary, where the habit of method is present and effective, things the most remote and diverse in time, place, and outward circumstance, are brought into mental contiguity and succession, the more striking as the less expected. But while I would impress the necessity of this habit, the illustrations adduced give proof that in undue preponderance, and when the prerogative of the mind is stretched into despotism, the discourse may degenerate into the grotesque or the fantastical.

With what a profound insight into the constitution of the human soul is this exhibited to us in the character of the Prince of Denmark, where flying from the sense of reality, and seeking a reprieve from the pressure of its duties in that ideal activity, the overbalance of which, with the consequent indisposition to action, is his disease, he compels the reluctant good sense of the high yet healthful-minded Horatio to follow him in his wayward meditation amid the graves !

HAM. To what base uses we may return, Horatio ! Why may not imagination trace the noble dust of Alexander till he find it stopping a bung-hole ?

HOR. 'Twere to consider too curiously, to consider so.

HAM. No, 'faith, not a jot ; but to follow him thither with modesty enough, and likelihood to lead it : As thus ; Alexander died, Alexander was buried, Alexander returneth to dust ; the dust is earth ; of earth we make loam : And

why of that loam whereto he was converted, might they not stop a beer-barrel?

Imperious Cæsar, dead, and turn'd to clay,
Might stop a hole to keep the wind away! *

But let it not escape our recollection, that when the objects thus connected are proportionate to the connecting energy, relatively to the real, or at least to the desirable, sympathies of mankind; it is from the same character that we derive the genial method in the famous soliloquy, "To be, or not to be"†—which, admired as it is, and has been, has yet received only the first-fruits of the admiration due to it.

We have seen that from the confluence of innumerable impressions in each moment of time the mere passive memory must needs tend to confusion; a rule, the seeming exceptions to which (the thunder-bursts in *Lear*, for instance) are really confirmations of its truth. For, in many instances, the predominance of some mighty passion takes the place of the guiding thought, and the result presents the method of nature, rather than the habit of the individual. For thought, imagination (and I may add, passion), are, in their very essence, the first, connective, the latter co-adunative: and it has been shown, that if the excess lead to method misapplied, and to connections of the moment, the absence, or marked deficiency, either precludes method altogether, both form and substance; or (as the fol-

* Aët v. sc. 1.

† Aët iii. sc. 1.

lowing extract will exemplify) retains the outward form only.

My liege and Madam, to expostulate
What majesty should be, what duty is,
Why day is day, night night, and time is time,
Were nothing but to waste night, day and time.
Therefore—since brevity is the soul of wit,
And tediousness the limbs and outward flourishes,—
I will be brief. Your noble son is mad :
Mad call I it ; for to define true madness,
What is't, but to be nothing else but mad !
But let that go.

QUEEN. More matter with less art.

POL. Madam, I swear, I use no art at all.
That he is mad, 'tis true : 'tis true, 'tis pity :
And pity 'tis, 'tis true : a foolish figure ;
But farewell it, for I will use no art.
Mad let us grant him then : and now remains,
That we find out the cause of this effect,
Or rather say the cause of this defect :
For this effect defective comes by cause.
Thus it remains, and the remainder thus
Perpend.*

Does not the irresistible sense of the ludicrous in this flourish of the soul-surviving body of old Polonius's intellect, not less than in the endless confirmations and most undeniable matters of fact of Tapster Pompey or the hostess of the tavern prove to our feelings, even before the word is found which presents the truth to our understandings, that confusion and formality are but the opposite poles of the same null-point ?

It is Shakespeare's peculiar excellence, that throughout the whole of his splendid picture-gal-

* Act ii. sc. 2.

lery (the reader will excuse the acknowledged inadequacy of this metaphor), we find individuality every where, mere portrait no where. In all his various characters, we still feel ourselves communing with the same nature, which is every where present as the vegetable sap in the branches, sprays, leaves, buds, blossoms, and fruits, their shapes, tastes, and odours. Speaking of the effect, that is, his works themselves, we may define the excellence of their method as consisting in that just proportion, that union and interpenetration, of the universal and the particular, which must ever pervade all works of decided genius and true science. For method implies a progressive transition, and it is the meaning of the word in the original language. The Greek μέθοδος is literally a way or path of transit. Thus we extol the Elements of Euclid, or Socrates' discourse with the slave in the Menon of Plato,* as methodical, a term which no one who holds himself bound to think or speak correctly, would apply to the alphabetical order or arrangement of a common dictionary. But as without continuous transition there can be no method, so without a preconception there can be no transition with continuity. The term, method, cannot therefore, otherwise than by abuse, be applied to a mere dead arrangement, containing in itself no principle of progression.

* Λέγε γάρ μοι σύ· οὐ τὸ μὲν τετράπουν τοῦτο ἡμῖν ἐστὶ χώριον;
κ. τ. λ.—*Ed.*



ESSAY V.

Scientiis idem quod plantis. Si planta aliqua uti in animo habeas, de radice quid fiat, nil refert: si vero transferre cupias in aliud solum, tutius est radicibus uti quam surculis. Sic traditio, quæ nunc in usu est, exhibet plane tanquam truncos (pulchros illos quidem) scientiarum; sed tamen absque radicibus fabro lignario certe commodos, at plantatori inutiles. Quod si, disciplinæ ut crescant, tibi cordi sit, de truncis minus sis sollicitus: ad id curam adhibe, ut radices illæ, etiam cum aliquantulo terræ adhærentis, extrahantur: dummodo hoc pacto et scientiam propriam revivere, vestigiaque cognitionis tuæ remetiri possis; et eam sic transplantare in animum alienum, sicut crevit in tuo. BACON.*

It is with sciences as with trees. If it be your purpose to make some particular use of the tree, you need not concern yourself about the roots. But if you wish to transfer it into another soil, it is then safer to employ the roots than the scions. Thus the mode of teaching most common at present exhibits clearly enough the trunks, as it were, of the sciences, and those too of handsome growth; but nevertheless, without the roots, valuable and convenient as they undoubtedly are to the carpenter, they are useless to the planter. But if you have at heart the advancement of education, as that which proposes to itself the general discipline of the mind for its end and aim, be less anxious concerning the trunks, and let it be your care, that the roots should be extracted entire, even though a small portion of the soil should adhere to them: so that at all events you may be able, by this mean, both to review your own scientific ac-

* *De Augment. Scient.* vi. c. 2, with some verbal alterations and transposition.—*Ed.*

quirements, re-measuring as it were the steps of your knowledge for your own satisfaction, and at the same time to transplant it into the minds of others, just as it grew in your own.

IT has been observed, in a preceding page, that the relations of objects are prime materials of method, and that the contemplation of relations is the indispensable condition of thinking methodically. It becomes necessary therefore to add, that there are two kinds of relation, in which objects of mind may be contemplated. The first is that of law, which, in its absolute perfection, is conceivable only of the Supreme Being, whose creative idea not only appoints to each thing its position, but in that position, and in consequence of that position, gives it its qualities, yea, gives it its very existence, as that particular thing. Yet in whatever science the relation of the parts to each other and to the whole is predetermined by a truth originating in the mind, and not abstracted or generalized from observation of the parts, there we affirm the presence of a law, if we are speaking of the physical sciences, as of astronomy for instance; or the presence of fundamental ideas, if our discourse be upon those sciences, the truths of which, as truths absolute, not merely have an independent origin in the mind, but continue to exist in and for the mind alone.* Such, for instance, is geometry,

* Here I have fallen into an error. The terms, idea and law, are always correlative. Instead of geometrical ideas, I ought to have said theorems;—not theories—but

and such are the ideas of a perfect circle, of asymptotes, and the like.

I have thus assigned the first place in the science of method to law; and first of the first, to law, as the absolute kind which comprehending in itself the substance of every possible degree precludes from its conception all degree, not by generalization but by its own plenitude. As such, therefore, and as the sufficient cause of the reality correspondent thereto, I contemplate it as exclusively an attribute of the Supreme Being, inseparable from the idea of God; adding, however, that from the contemplation of law in this its only perfect form, must be derived all true insight into all other grounds and principles necessary to method, as the science common to all sciences, which in each, in the words of Plato, *τυγχάνει ὃν ἄλλο αὐτῆς τῆς ἐπιστήμης*. Alienated from this intuition or steadfast faith, ingenious men may produce schemes conducive to the peculiar purposes of particular sciences, but no scientific system.

But though I cannot enter on the proof of this assertion, I dare not remain exposed to the suspicion of having obtruded a mere private opinion, as a fundamental truth. The authorities are such that my only difficulty is occasioned by their number. The following extract from Aristocles (preserved with other interesting fragments of the same writer

θεωρήματα, the intelligible products of contemplation, intellectual objects in the mind, and of and for the mind exclusively.—1829.

by Eusebius of Cæsarea) is as explicit as peremptory. Ἐφίλοσόφησε δὲ Πλάτων, εἰ καὶ τις ἄλλος τῶν πώποτε, γνησίως καὶ τελείως. Ἡξίου δὲ μὴ δύνασθαι τὰ ἀνθρώπινα κατιδεῖν ἡμᾶς, εἰ μὴ τὰ θεῖα πρότερον ὁφείη.* And Plato himself in his Republic, happily still extant, evidently alludes to the same doctrine. For personating Socrates in the discussion of a most important problem, namely, whether political justice is or is not the same as private honesty, after many inductions, and much analytic reasoning, he breaks off with these words—καὶ εὖ γ' ἴσθι, ὦ Γλαύκων, ὡς ἡ ἐμὴ δόξα, ἀκριβῶς μὲν τοῦτο ἐκ τοιούτων μεθόδων, οἷαίς νῦν ἐν τοῖς λόγοις χρώμεθα, οὐ μὴ ποτε λάβωμεν· ἀλλὰ γὰρ μακροτέρα καὶ πλείων ὁδὸς ἢ ἐπὶ τοῦτο ἄγουσα†—not however, he adds, precluding the former (the analytic, and inductive, to wit) which have their place likewise, in which (but as subordinate to the other) they are both useful and requisite. If any doubt could be entertained as to the purport of these words, it would

* *Præparat. Evangel.* xi. c. 3.—*Ed.* Plato, who philosophized legitimately and perfectly, if ever any man did in any age, held it for an axiom, that it is not possible for us to have an insight into things human (that is, the nature and relations of man, and the objects presented by nature for his investigation, without a previous contemplation or intellectual vision of things divine; that is, of truths that are to be affirmed concerning the absolute, as far as they can be made known to us.

† *De Republica*, iv. But know well, O Glaucon, as my firm persuasion, that by such methods, as we have hitherto used in this inquisition, we can never attain to a satisfactory insight: for it is a longer and ampler way that conducts to this.

be removed by the fact stated by Aristotle,* that Plato had discussed the problem, whether in order to scientific ends we must set out from principles or ascend towards them : in other words, whether the synthetic or analytic be the right method. But as no such question is directly discussed in the published works of the great master, Aristotle, must either have received it orally from Plato himself, or have found it in the *ἀγγραφα δόγματα*, the private text-books or manuals constructed by his select disciples, and intelligible to those only who like themselves had been entrusted with the esoteric, or interior and unveiled, doctrines of Platonism. Comparing this therefore with the writings, which he held it safe or not profane to make public, we may safely conclude, that Plato considered the investigation of truth *a posteriori* as that which is employed in explaining the results of a more scientific process to those, for whom the knowledge of the results was alone requisite and sufficient; or in preparing the mind for legitimate method, by exposing the insufficiency or self-contradictions of the proofs and results obtained by the contrary process. Hence therefore the earnestness with which the genuine Platonists afterwards opposed the doctrine (that all demonstration consists of identical propositions) advanced by Stilpo, and maintained by the Megaric school, who denied the

* Εὖ γὰρ καὶ Πλάτων ἠπόρει τοῦτο καὶ ἐζήτει, πότερον ἀπὸ τῶν ἀρχῶν, ἢ ἐπὶ τὰς ἀρχάς, ἐστὶν ἡ ὁδός.—*Ethic. Nicom.* I. c. 2.—*Ed.*

synthesis and, like Hume and others in recent times, held geometry itself to be merely analytical.

The grand problem, the solution of which forms, according to Plato, the final object and distinctive character of philosophy, is this : for all that exists conditionally (that is, the existence of which is inconceivable except under the condition of its dependency on some other as its antecedent) to find a ground that is unconditional and absolute, and thereby to reduce the aggregate of human knowledge to a system. For the relation common to all being known, the appropriate orbit of each becomes discoverable, together with its peculiar relations to its concentrics in the common sphere of subordination. Thus the centrality of the sun having been established, and the law of the distances of the planets from the sun having been determined, we possess the means of calculating the distance of each from the other. But as all objects of sense are in continual flux, and as the notices of them by the senses must, as far as they are true notices, change with them, while scientific principles or laws are no otherwise principles of science than as they are permanent and always the same, the latter were appropriated to the pure reason, either as its products or as * implanted in it.

* Which of these two doctrines was Plato's own opinion, it is hard to say. In many passages of his works, the latter (that is, the doctrine of innate, or rather of connate, ideas) seems to be it ; but from the character and avowed purpose of these works, as addressed to a promiscuous pub-

And now the remarkable fact forces itself on our attention, namely, that the material world is found to obey the same laws as had been deduced independently from the reason; and that the masses act by a force, which cannot be conceived to result from the component parts, known or imaginable. In magnetism, electricity, galvanism, and in chemistry generally, the mind is led instinctively, as it were, to regard the working powers as conducted, transmitted, or accumulated by the sensible bodies, and not as inherent. This fact has, at all times, been the strong hold alike of the materialists and of the spiritualists, equally solvable by the two contrary hypotheses, and fairly solved by neither. In the clear and masterly* review of the

lic, therefore preparatory, and for the discipline of the mind, rather than directly doctrinal, it is not improbable that Plato chose it as the more popular representation, and as belonging to the poetic drapery of his *philosophemata*.

* I can conceive no better remedy for the overweening self-complacency of modern philosophy than the annulment of its pretended originality. The attempt has been made by Dutens, (*Récherches sur l'origine des découvertes attribuées aux Modernes*. 1766.—*Ed.*) but he failed in it by flying to the opposite extreme. When he should have confined himself to the philosophies, he extended his attack to the sciences and even to the main discoveries of later times; and thus instead of vindicating the ancients, he became the calumniator of the moderns; as far at least as detraction is calumny. A splendid and most instructive course of lectures might be given, comprising the origin and progress, the fates and fortunes of philosophy from Pythagoras to Locke, with the lives and succession of the philosophers in each sect; tracing the progress of speculative science chiefly in relation to the gradual development of the human mind,

elder philosophies, which must be ranked among the most splendid proofs of his judgment no less than of his genius, and more expressly in the critique on the atomic or corpuscular doctrine of Democritus and his followers as the one extreme, and in that of the pure rationalism of Zeno the Eleatic as the other, Plato has proved incontrovertibly that in both alike the basis is too narrow to support the superstructure; that the grounds of both are false or disputable; and that, if these were conceded, yet neither the one nor the other scheme is adequate to the solution of the problem, — namely, what is the ground of the coincidence between reason and experience; or between the laws of matter and the ideas of the pure intellect. The only answer which Plato deemed the question ca-

but without omitting the favourable or inauspicious influence of circumstances and the accidents of individual genius. The main divisions would be, 1. From Thales and Pythagoras to the appearance of the Sophists: 2. And of Socrates; — the character and effects of Socrates's life and doctrines illustrated in the instances of Xenophon, as his most faithful representative, and of Antisthenes or the Cynic sect as the one partial view of his philosophy, and of Aristippus or the Cyrenaic sect as the other and opposite extreme: 3. Plato, and Platonism: 4. Aristotle and the Peripatetic school: 5. Zeno, and Stoicism, Epicurus and Epicureanism, with the effects of these in the Roman republic and empire: 6. The rise of the Eclectic or Alexandrian philosophy, the attempt to set up a pseudo-Platonic polytheism against Christianity, the degradation of philosophy itself into mysticism and magic, and its final disappearance, as philosophy, under Justinian: 7. The resumption of the Aristotelian philosophy in the thirteenth century, and the successive re-appearance of the different ancient sects from the restoration of literature to our own times.

pable of receiving, compels the reason to pass out of itself and seek the ground of this agreement in a supersensual essence, which being at once the ideal of the reason and the cause of the material world, is the pre-establisher of the harmony in and between both. Religion therefore is the ultimate aim of philosophy, in consequence of which philosophy itself becomes the supplement of the sciences, both as the convergence of all to the common end, namely wisdom; and as supplying the copula, which, modified in each in the comprehension of its parts in one whole, is in its principles common to all, as integral parts of one system. And this is method, itself a distinct science, the immediate offspring of philosophy, and the link or mordant by which philosophy becomes scientific and the sciences philosophical.





ESSAY VI.

Ἑπάντων ζητῶντες λόγον ἔξωθεν ἀναιρῶσι λόγον.

THE second relation is that of theory, in which the existing forms and qualities of objects, discovered by observation or experiment, suggest a given arrangement of many under one point of view; and this not merely or principally in order to facilitate the remembrance, recollection, or communication of the same; but for the purposes of understanding, and in most instances of controlling, them. In other words, all theory supposes the general idea of cause and effect. The scientific arts of medicine, chemistry, and physiology in general, are examples of a method hitherto founded on this second sort of relation.

Between these two lies the method in the fine arts, which belongs indeed to this second or external relation, because the effect and position of the parts is always more or less influenced by the knowledge and experience of their previous qualities; but which nevertheless constitutes a link connecting the second form of relation with the first. For in all that truly merits the name of poetry in its

most comprehensive sense, there is a necessary predominance of the ideas, that is, of that which originates in the artist himself, and a comparative indifference of the materials. A true musical taste is soon dissatisfied with the harmonica or any similar instrument of glass or steel, because the body of the sound (as the Italians phrase it), or that effect which is derived from the materials, encroaches too far on the effect from the proportions of the notes, or that which is given to music by the mind. To prove the high value as well as the superior dignity of the first relation, and to evince, that on this alone a perfect method can be grounded, and that the methods attainable by the second are at best but approximations to the first, or tentative exercises in the hope of discovering it, forms the first object of the present disquisition.

These truths I have (as the most pleasing and popular mode of introducing the subject) hitherto illustrated from Shakespeare. But the same truths, namely the necessity of a mental initiative to all method, as well as a careful attention to the conduct of the mind in the exercise of method itself, may be equally, and here perhaps more characteristically, proved from the most familiar of the sciences. We may draw our elucidation even from those which are at present fashionable among us; from botany or from chemistry. In the lowest attempt at a methodical arrangement of the former science, that of artificial classification for the preparatory purpose of a nomenclature, some antec-

dent must have been contributed by the mind itself ; some purpose must be in view ; or some question at least must have been proposed to nature, grounded, as all questions are, upon some idea of the answer ; as for instance, the assumption that—"two great sexes animate the world." * For no man can confidently conceive a fact to be universally true who does not with equal confidence anticipate its necessity, and who does not believe that necessity to be demonstrable by an insight into its nature, whenever and wherever such insight can be obtained. We acknowledge, we reverence, the obligations of botany to Linnæus, who, adopting from Bartholinus, Sebastian Vaillant, and others, the sexuality of plants, grounded thereon a scheme of classific and distinctive marks, by which one man's experience may be communicated to others, and the objects safely reasoned on while absent, and recognized as soon as and wherever they are met with. He invented a universal character for the language of botany chargeable with no greater imperfections than are to be found in the alphabets of every particular language. As for the study of the ancients, so for that of the works of nature, an accidence and a dictionary are the first and indispensable requisites : and to the illustrious Swede, bótany is indebted for both. But neither was the central idea of vegetation itself, by the light of which we might have seen the collateral relations of the

* Par. Loft, viii. 151.—*Ed.*

vegetable to the inorganic and to the animal world, nor the constitutive nature and inner necessity of sex itself, revealed to Linnæus.* Hence, as in all

* The word nature has been used in two senses, actively and passively; energetic, or *forma formans*, and material, or *forma formata*. In the first (the sense in which the word is used in the text) it signifies the inward principle of whatever is requisite for the reality of a thing, as existent: while the essence or essential property, signifies the inner principle of all that appertains to the possibility of a thing. Hence, in accurate language, we say the essence of a mathematical circle or other geometrical figure, not the nature; because in the conception of forms purely geometrical there is no expression or implication of their real existence. In the second or material sense of the word nature, we mean by it the sum total of all things, as far as they are objects of our senses, and consequently of possible experience; the aggregate of *phænomena*, whether existing for our outward senses, or for our inner sense. The doctrine concerning material nature would therefore (the word physiology being both ambiguous in itself, and already otherwise appropriated) be more properly entitled phænomenology, distinguished into its two grand divisions, somatology and psychology. The doctrine concerning energetic nature is comprised in the science of dynamics; the union of which with phænomenology, and the alliance of both with the sciences of the possible, or of the conceivable, namely, logic and mathematics, constitute natural philosophy.

Having thus explained the term nature, I now more especially entreat the reader's attention to the sense in which here, and every where through this essay, I use the word idea. I assert, that the very impulse to universalize any *phænomenon* involves the prior assumption of some efficient law in nature, which in a thousand different forms is evermore one and the same, entire in each, yet comprehending all, and incapable of being abstracted or generalized from any number of *phænomena*, because it is itself pre-supposed in each and all as their common ground and condition, and because every definition of a *genus* is the adequate definition of the lowest species alone, while the efficient law must contain the ground of all in all. It is attributed, ne-

other cases where the master light is missing, so in this, the reflective mind avoids Scylla only to lose itself in Charybdis. If we adhere to the general notion of sex, as abstracted from the more obvious modes and forms in which the sexual relation manifests itself, we soon meet with whole classes of plants to which it is found inapplicable. If arbitrarily, we give it indefinite extension, it is diffipated into the barren truism, that all specific products suppose specific means of production. Thus a growth and a birth are distinguished by the mere verbal definition, that the latter is a whole in itself, the former not: and when we would apply even this to nature, we are baffled by objects (the flower polypus, for example, and many others) in which each is the other. All that can be done by

ver derived. The utmost we ever venture to say is, that the falling of an apple suggested the law of gravitation to Sir I. Newton. Now a law and an idea are correlative terms, and differ only as object and subject, as being and truth.

Such is the doctrine of the *Novum Organum* of Lord Bacon, agreeing (as I shall more largely show in the text) in all essential points with the true doctrine of Plato, the apparent differences being for the greater part occasioned by the Grecian sage having applied his principles chiefly to the investigation of the mind, and the method of evolving its powers, and the English philosopher to the development of nature. That our great countryman speaks too often detractingly of the divine philosopher must be explained, partly by the tone given to thinking minds by the Reformation, the founders and fathers of which saw in the Aristotelians, or schoolmen, the antagonists of Protestantism, and in the Italian Platonists the despisers and secret enemies of Christianity itself; and partly, by his having formed his notions of Plato's doctrine from the absurdities and phantasms of his misinterpreters, rather than from an unprejudiced study of the original works.

the most patient and active industry, by the widest and most continuous researches; all that the amplest survey of the vegetable realm, brought under immediate contemplation by the most stupendous collections of species and varieties, can suggest; all that minutest dissection and exactest chemical analysis, can unfold; all that varied experiment and the position of plants and of their component parts in every conceivable relation to light, heat, (and whatever else we distinguish as imponderable substances), to earth, air, water, to the supposed constituents of air and water, separate and in all proportions—in short, all that chemical agents and re-agents can disclose or adduce;—all these have been brought, as conscripts, into the field, with the completest accoutrement, in the best discipline, under the ablest commanders. Yet after all that was effected by Linnæus himself, not to mention the labours of Gesner,* Cæsalpinus,† Ray,‡ Tournefort,§ and the other heroes who preceded the general adoption of the sexual system, as the basis of artificial arrangement;—after all the successive toils and enterprises of Hedwig,|| Jussieu, Mirbel,¶ Sir

* Conrad G. who died in 1568. See his Letters.—Ed.

† *Libri xv. De Plantis*.—Ed.

‡ *Methodus Plantarum nova*. 1682. *Historia Plantarum*. 1686-7-1704.—Ed.

§ *Elémens de Botanique; ou, Méthode pour connaître les Plantes*. 1694.—Ed.

|| *Theoria generationis et fructificationis plantarum cryptogamicarum Linnæi*. 1784. *Cryptogamia*. 1787.—Ed.

¶ *Histoire générale et particulière des plantes; ou, Traité de physiologie végétale. Exposition de la théorie de l'organi-*

James Smith, Knight, Ellis, and others,—what is botany at this present hour? Little more than an enormous nomenclature; a huge catalogue, well arranged, and yearly and monthly augmented, in various editions, each with its own scheme of technical memory and its own conveniences of reference. A dictionary in which (to carry on the metaphor) an Ainsworth arranges the contents by the initials; a Walker by the endings; a Scapula by the radicals; and a Cominius by the similitude of the uses and purposes. The terms system, method, science, are mere improprieties of courtesy, when applied to a mass enlarging by endless appositions, but without a nerve that oscillates, or a pulse that throbs, in sign of growth or inward sympathy. The innocent amusement, the healthful occupation, the ornamental accomplishment of amateurs (most honourable indeed and deserving of all praise as a preventive substitute for the stall, the kennel, and the subscription-room), it has yet to expect the devotion and energies of the philosopher.

So long back as the first appearance of Dr. Darwin's *Phytologia*, I, then* in earliest manhood, presumed to hazard the opinion, that the physiological botanists were hunting in a false direction, and sought for analogy where they should have looked for antithesis. I saw, or thought I saw, that the harmony between the vegetable and

sation végétale. 1805. *Elémens de physiologie végétale et de botanique.* 1815.—Ed.

* 1801. The *Zoonomia* was published in 1793.—Ed.

animal world, was not a harmony of resemblance, but of contrast; and that their relation to each other was that of corresponding opposites. They seemed to me, whose mind had been formed by observation, unaided, but at the same time unenthralled, by partial experiment, as two streams from the same fountain indeed, but flowing the one due west, and the other direct east, and that consequently, the resemblance would be as the proximity, greatest in the first and rudimental products of vegetable and animal organization. Whereas, according to the received notion, the highest and most perfect vegetable, and the lowest and rudest animal forms, ought to have seemed the links of the two systems, which is contrary to fact. Since that time, the same idea has dawned in the minds of philosophers capable of demonstrating its objective truth by induction of facts in an unbroken series of correspondences in nature. From these men, or from minds enkindled by their labours, we may hope hereafter to receive it, or rather the yet higher idea to which it refers us, matured into laws of organic nature, and thence to have one other splendid proof, that with the knowledge of law alone dwell power and prophecy, decisive experiment, and, lastly, a scientific method, that dissipating with its earliest rays the gnomes of hypothesis and the mists of theory may, within a single generation, open out on the philosophic fair discoveries that had baffled the gigantic, but blind and guideless, industry of ages.

Such, too, is the case with the assumed indecomposable substances of the laboratory. They are the symbols of elementary powers, and the exponents of a law, which, as the root of all these powers, the chemical philosopher, whatever his theory may be, is instinctively labouring to extract. This instinct, again, is itself but the form, in which the idea, the mental correlative of the law, first announces its incipient germination in his own mind: and hence proceeds the striving after unity of principle through all the diversity of forms, with a feeling resembling that which accompanies our endeavours to recollect a forgotten name; when we seem at once to have and not to have it; which the memory feels but cannot find. Thus, as “the lunatic, the lover, and the poet,”* suggest each the other to Shakespeare’s Theseus, as soon as his thoughts present to him the one form, of which they are but varieties; so water and flame, the diamond, the charcoal, and the mantling champagne, with its ebullient sparkles, are convoked and fraternized by the theory of the chemist. This is, in truth, the first charm of chemistry, and the secret of the almost universal interest excited by its discoveries. The serious complacency which is afforded by the sense of truth, utility, permanence, and progression, blends with and ennobles the exhilarating surprise and the pleasurable sting of curiosity, which accompany the propounding and the solving of an

* *Midf. Night’s Dream*, act v. sc. 1.—*Ed.*

enigma. It is the sense of a principle of connection given by the mind, and sanctioned by the correspondency of nature. Hence the strong hold which in all ages chemistry has had on the imagination. If in Shakespeare we find nature idealized into poetry, through the creative power of a profound yet observant meditation, so through the meditative observation of a Davy, a Wollaston, or a Hatchett;

———— By some connatural force,
Powerful at greatest distance to unite
With secret amity things of like kind,

we find poetry, as it were, substantiated and realized in nature,—yea, nature itself disclosed to us, *geminam istam naturam, quæ fit et facit, et creat et creatur*, as at once the poet and the poem.





ESSAY VII.

Ταυτῇ τοινῦν διαίρω χῶρις μὲν, οὓς νῦν δὴ ἔλεγεσ φιλοθεάμονάς τε, καὶ φιλοτέχνους, καὶ πρακτικούς, καὶ χῶρις αὖ περὶ ὧν ὁ λόγος, οὓς μόνους ἂν τις ὀρθῶς προσείποι φιλοσόφους, ὡς μὲν γινώσκοντας, τίνος ἔστιν ἐπιστήμη ἐκάστη πούτων τῶν ἐπιστήμων, ὁ τυγχάνει ὃν ἄλλο αὐτῆς τῆς ἐπιστήμης·

PLATO.

In the following then I distinguish, first, those whom you indeed may call philotheorists, or philotechnists, or practitioners, and secondly those whom alone you may rightly denominate philosophers, as knowing what the science of all these branches of science is, which may prove to be something more than the mere aggregate of the knowledges in any particular science.

FROM Shakespear to Plato, from the philosophic poet to the poetic philosopher, the transition is easy, and the road is crowded with illustrations of our present subject. For of Plato's works, the larger and more valuable portion have all one common end, which comprehends and shines through the particular purpose of each several dialogue; and this is to establish the sources, to evolve the principles, and exemplify the art of method. This is the clue, without which it would be difficult to exculpate the noblest productions of the divine philosopher from the charge of being tortuous and labyrinthine in their progress, and unsatisfactory in

their oftenfible results. The latter indeed appear not feldom to have been drawn for the purpose of ftarting a new problem, rather than that of folving the one propofed as the fubject of the previous difcuffion. But with the clear infight that the purpose of the writer is not fo much to eftablifh any particular truth, as to remove the obftacles, the continuance of which is preclufive of all truth, the whole fcheme affumes a different afpect, and juftifies itfelf in all its dimenfions. We fee, that to open anew a well of fpringing water, not to cleanfe the ftagnant tank, or fill, bucket by bucket, the leaden ciftern ; that the education of the intellect, by awakening the principle and method of felf-development, was his propofed object, not any fpecific information that can be conveyed into it from without ;—not to affift in ftoring the paffive mind with the various forts of knowledge moft in request, as if the human foul were a mere repository or banqueting-room, but to place it in fuch relations of circumftance as fhould gradually excite the germinal power that craves no knowledge but what it can take up into itfelf, what it can appropriate, and re-produce in fruits of its own. To fhape, to dye, to paint over, and to mechanize the mind, he refigned, as their proper trade, to the fophifts, againft whom he waged open and unremitting war. For the ancients, as well as the moderns, had their machinery for the extemporaneous mintage of intellects, by means of which, off-hand, as it were, the fcholar was enabled to make a figure

on any and all subjects, on any and all occasions. They too had their glittering vapours, which (as the comic poet tells us) fed a host of sophists—

μεγάλαι θεαὶ ἀνδράσιν ἀργοῖς,
αἵ περ γνῶμην, καὶ διάλεξιν, καὶ νοῦν ἡμῖν παρέχουσι,
καὶ τερατείαν, καὶ περίλεξιν, καὶ κροῦσιν, καὶ κατὰ ληψιν.

Great goddesses are they to lazy folks,
Who pour down on us gifts of fluent speech,
Sense most sententious, wonderful fine effect,
And how to talk about it and about it,
Thoughts brisk as bees, and pathos soft and thawy.

In fine, as improgressive arrangement is not method, so neither is a mere mode or set fashion of doing a thing. Are further facts required? I appeal to the notorious fact that zoology, soon after the commencement of the latter half of the last century, was falling abroad, weighed down and crushed, as it were, by the inordinate number and manifoldness of facts and *phænomena* apparently separate, without evincing the least promise of systematizing itself by any inward combination, any vital interdependence, of its parts. John Hunter, who appeared at times almost a stranger to the grand conception, which yet never ceased to work in him as his genius and governing spirit, rose at length in the horizon of physiology and comparative anatomy. In his printed works, the one directing thought seems evermore to flit before him, twice or thrice only to have been seized, and after a momentary detention to have been again let go:

* *Aristoph. Nubes.* 316, &c.—*Ed.*

as if the words of the charm had been incomplete, and it had appeared at its own will only to mock his calling. At length, in the astonishing preparations for his museum, he constructed it for the scientific apprehension out of the unspoken alphabet of nature. Yet notwithstanding the imperfection in the annunciation of the idea, how exhilarating have been the results ! I dare appeal to * Abernethy, to Everard Home, to Hatchett, whose communication to Sir Everard on the egg and its analogies, in a recent paper of the latter (itself of high excellence) in the Philosophical Transactions, I may point out as being, in the proper sense of the term, the development of a fact in the history of physiology, and to which I refer as exhibiting a luminous instance of what I mean by the discovery of a central *phænomenon*. To these I appeal, whether whatever is grandest in the views of Cuvier be not either a reflection of this light or a continuation of its rays, well and wisely directed through fit *media* to the appropriate object.†

* Since this was written, Mr. Abernethy has realized this anticipation, dictated solely by my wishes, and at the time justified only by my general admiration of Mr. A.'s talents and principles, and composed without the least knowledge that he was then actually engaged in proving the assertion here hazarded, at large and in detail. See his eminent Treatise on Physiology, 1821.

† Nor should it be wholly unnoticed, that Cuvier, who, I understand, was not born in France, and is not of unmixed French extraction, had prepared himself for his illustrious labours (as I learn from a reference in the first chapter of his great work, and should have concluded from the gene-

We have seen that a previous act and conception of the mind is indispensable even to the mere semblances of method; that neither fashion, mode, nor orderly arrangement can be produced without a prior purpose, and a pre-cogitation *ad intentionem ejus quod quæritur*, though this purpose may have been itself excited, and this pre-cogitation itself abstracted from the perceived likenesses and differences of the objects to be arranged. But it has likewise been shown, that fashion, mode, ordonnance, are not method, inasmuch as all method supposes a principle of unity with progression; in other words, progressive transition without breach of continuity. But such a principle, it has been proved, can never in the sciences of experiment or in those of observation be adequately supplied by a theory built on generalization. For what shall determine the mind to abstract and generalize one common point rather than another;—and within what limits, from what number of individual objects, shall the generalization be made? The theory must still require a prior theory for its own legitimate construction. With the mathematician the definition makes the object, and pre-establishes the terms which, and which alone, can occur in the after-reasoning. If a circle be found not to have

ral style of thinking, though the language betrays suppression, as of one who doubted the sympathy of his readers or audience) in a very different school of methodology and philosophy than any which Paris could have afforded.

the *radii* from the centre to the circumference perfectly equal, which in fact it would be absurd to expect of any material circle, it follows only that it was not a circle; and the tranquil geometrician would content himself with smiling at the *quid pro quo* of the simple objector. A mathematical *theoria seu contemplatio* may therefore be perfect. For the mathematician can be certain that he has contemplated all that appertains to his proposition. The celebrated Euler, treating on some point respecting arches, makes this curious remark: —“ All experience is in contradiction to this; *sed potius fidendum est analysi*; but this is no reason for doubting the analysis.” The words sound paradoxical; but in truth mean no more than this, that the properties of space are not less certainly the properties of space because they can never be entirely transferred to material bodies. But in physics, that is, in all the sciences which have for their objects the things of nature, and not the *entia rationis*—more philosophically, intellectual acts and the products of those acts, existing exclusively in and for the intellect itself—the definition must follow, and not precede, the reasoning. It is representative not constitutive, and is indeed little more than an abbreviature of the preceding observation, and the deductions therefrom. But as the observation, though aided by experiment, is necessarily limited and imperfect, the definition must be equally so. The history of theories, and the frequency of

their subversion by the discovery of a single new fact, supply the best illustrations of this truth.*

As little can a true scientific method be grounded

* The following extract from a most respectable scientific Journal contains an exposition of the impossibility of a perfect theory in physics, the more striking because it is directly against the purpose and intention of the writer. I content myself with one question, — what if Kepler, what if Newton in his investigations concerning the tides, had holden themselves bound to this canon, and, instead of propounding a law, had employed themselves exclusively in collecting materials for a theory?

“The magnetic influence has long been known to have a variation which is constantly changing; but that change is so slow, and at the same time so different in various parts of the world, that it would be in vain to seek for the means of reducing it to established rules, until all its local and particular circumstances are clearly ascertained and recorded by accurate observations made in various parts of the globe. The necessity and importance of such observations are now pretty generally understood, and they have been actually carrying on for some years past; but these (and by parity of reason the incomparably greater number that remain to be made) must be collected, collated, proved, and afterwards brought together into one focus before ever a foundation can be formed upon which anything like a sound and stable theory can be constituted for the explanation of such changes.” *Journal of Science and the Arts*, No. vii. p. 103.

An intelligent friend, on reading the words “into one focus,” observed: “But what and where is the lens?” I however fully agree with the writer. All this and much more must have been achieved before “a sound and stable theory” could be “constituted;”—which even then (except as far as it might occasion the discovery of a law) might possibly explain (*ex plicis plana reddere*), but never account for, the facts in question. But the most satisfactory comment on these and similar assertions would be afforded by a matter of fact history of the rise and progress, the accelerating and retarding *momenta*, of science in the civilized world.

on an hypothesis, unless where the hypothesis is an exponential image or picture-language of an idea which is contained in it more or less clearly ; or the symbol of an undiscovered law, like the characters of unknown quantities in algebra, for the purpose of submitting the *phænomena* to a scientific *calculus*. In all other instances, it is itself a real or supposed *phænomenon*, and therefore a part of the problem which it is to solve. It may be among the foundation-stones of the edifice, but can never be the ground.

But in experimental philosophy, it may be said how much do we not owe to accident? Doubtless : but let it not be forgotten, that if the discoveries so made stop there ; if they do not excite some master idea ; if they do not lead to some law (in whatever dress of theory or hypothesis the fashions and prejudices of the time may disguise or disfigure it) ;—the discoveries may remain for ages limited in their uses, insecure and unproductive. How many centuries, we might have said *millennia*, have passed, since the first accidental discovery of the attraction and repulsion of light bodies by rubbed amber ! Compare the interval with the progress made within less than a century, after the discovery of the *phænomena* that led immediately to a theory of electricity. That here as in many other instances, the theory was supported by insecure hypotheses ; that by one theorist two heterogeneous fluids are assumed, the vitreous and the resinous ; by another, a *plus* and *minus* of the same

fluid; that a third considers it a mere modification of light; while a fourth composes the electrical *aura* of oxygen, hydrogen, and caloric;—this does but place the truth we have been evolving in a stronger and clearer light. For abstract from all these suppositions, or rather imaginations, that which is common to, and involved in, them all; and we shall have neither notional fluid or fluids, nor chemical compounds, nor elementary matter,—but the idea of two—opposite—forces, tending to rest by *equilibrium*. These are the sole factors of the *calculus*, alike in all the theories. These give the law, and in it the method, both of arranging the *phænomena* and of substantiating appearances into facts of science; with a success proportionate to the clearness or confusedness of the insight into the law. For this reason, I anticipate the greatest improvements in the method, the nearest approaches to a system of electricity, from these philosophers, who have presented the law most purely, and the correlative idea as an idea;—those, namely, who, since the year 1798, in the true spirit of experimental dynamics, rejecting the imagination of any material substrate, simple or compound, contemplate in the *phænomena* of electricity the operation of a law which reigns through all nature, the law of polarity, or the manifestation of one power by opposite forces;—who trace in these appearances, as the most obvious and striking of its innumerable forms, the agency of the positive and negative poles of a power essential to all material construc-

tion ; the second, namely, of the three primary principles, for which the beautiful and most appropriate symbols are given by the mind in the three ideal dimensions of space.*

The time is, perhaps, nigh at hand, when the same comparison between the results of two unequal periods,—the interval between the knowledge of a fact, and that from the discovery of the law,—will be applicable to the sister science of magnetism. But how great the contrast between magnetism and electricity at the present moment ! From remotest antiquity, the attraction of iron by the magnet was known and noticed ; but, century after century, it remained the undisturbed property of poets and orators. The fact of the magnet and the fable of the phoenix stood on the same scale of utility. In the thirteenth century, or perhaps earlier, the polarity of the magnet, and its communicability to iron, were discovered ; and soon suggested a purpose so grand and important, that it may well be deemed the proudest trophy ever raised by accident † in the service of mankind,—the invention of

* “ Perhaps the attribution or analogy may seem fanciful at first sight, but I am in the habit of realizing to myself magnetism as length, electricity as breadth, and galvanism as depth.” *Table Talk*, p. 35. 2nd edit.—*Ed.*

† If accident it were ; if the compass did not obscurely travel to us from the remotest east ; if its existence there does not point to an age and a race, to which scholars of highest rank in the world of letters, Sir W. Jones, Bailly, Schlegel have attached faith. That it was known before the æra generally assumed for its invention, and not spoken of as a novelty, has been proved by Mr. Southey and others :

the compass. But it led to no idea, to no law, and consequently to no method: though a variety of *phænomena*, as startling as they are mysterious, have forced on us a presentiment of its intimate connection with all the great agencies of nature; of a revelation, in ciphers, the key to which is still wanting. I can recall no event of human history that impresses the imagination more deeply than the moment when Columbus,* on an unknown ocean, first perceived one of these startling facts, the change of the magnetic needle.

In what shall we seek the cause of this contrast between the rapid progress of electricity and the stationary condition of magnetism? As many theories, as many hypotheses, have been advanced in

(See the *Omniana*, vol. i. p. 210. No. 108, — where Mr. Southey quotes a passage from the *Partidas* (1250—7), very distinctly referring to the mariner's needle.—*Ed.*)

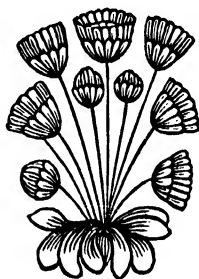
* It cannot be deemed alien from the purposes of this disquisition, if I am anxious to attract the attention of my readers to the importance of speculative meditation, even for the worldly interests of mankind; and to that concurrence of nature and historic event with the great revolutionary movements of individual genius, of which so many instances occur in the study of history; — to point out how nature, or that which in nature itself is more than nature, seems to come forward in order to meet, to aid, and to reward every idea excited by a contemplation of her methods in the spirit of filial care, and with the humility of love. It is with this view that I extract the following lines from an ode of Chiabrera's, which, in the strength of the thought and the lofty majesty of the poetry, has but "few peers in ancient or in modern song."

*Certo da cor, ch' alto destin non scelse,
Son l' imprese magnanime neglette;
Ma le bell' alme alle bell' opre elette*

the latter science as in the former. But the theories and fictions of the electricians contained an idea, and all the same idea, which has necessarily led to method; implicit indeed, and only regulative hitherto, but which requires little more than the dismissal of the imagery to become constitutive like the ideas of the geometrician. On the contrary, the assumptions of the magnetists (as for instance, the hypothesis that the planet itself is one vast magnet, or that an immense magnet is concealed within it, or that of a concentric globe within the earth, revolving on its own independent axis), are but repetitions of the same fact or *phænomenon* looked at through a magnifying glass; the reiteration of the problem, not its solution. The naturalist, who

*Sanno gioir nelle fatiche eccelse ;
 Nè biasmo popular, frale catena,
 Spirto d' onore, il suo cammin raffrena.
 Così lunga stagion per modi indegni
 Europa dispregzò l'inclita speme,
 Schernendo il vulgo e seco i regi insieme,
 Nudo nocchier promettitor di regni ;
 Ma per le sconosciute onde marine
 L' invitta prora ei pur sospinse al fine.
 Qual uom, che torni alla gentil consorte,
 Tal ei da sua magion spiegò l'antenne ;
 L' ocean corse, e i turbini sostenne,
 Vinse le crude immagini di morte ;
 Poscia, dell' ampio mar spenta la guerra,
 Scorse la dianzi favolosa terra.
 Allor dal cavo pin scende veloce,
 E di grand' orma il nuovo mondo imprime ;
 Nè men ratto per l'aria erge sublime,
 Segno del ciel, l'insuperabil croce ;
 E porge umile esempio, onde adorarla
 Debba sua gente.* CHIABRERA, P. I. 12.

cannot or will not see, that one fact is often worth a thousand, as including them all in itself, and that it first makes all the others facts,—who has not the head to comprehend, the soul to reverence, a central experiment or observation (what the Greeks would perhaps have called a *protophænomenon*),—will never receive an auspicious answer from the oracle of nature.





ESSAY VIII.

The soul doth give
 Brightness to the eye: and some say, that the sun
 If not enlighten'd by th' Intelligence
 That doth inhabit it, would shine no more
 Than a dull clod of earth.

CARTWRIGHT'S *Lady-Errant*, act iii. sc. iv.

IT is strange, yet characteristic of the spirit that was at work during the latter half of the last century, and of which the French revolution was, I hope, the closing monsoon, that the writings of Plato should be accused of estranging the mind from sober experience and substantial matter of fact, and of debauching it by fictions and generalities;—Plato, whose method is inductive throughout, who argues on all subjects not only from, but in and by, inductions of facts;—who warns us indeed against that usurpation of the senses, which quenching the *lumen siccum* of the mind, sends it astray after individual cases for their own sakes,—against that *tenuem et manipularem experientiam*, which remains ignorant even of the transitory relations, to which the *pauca particularia* of its idolatry not seldom owe their fluxional existence;—

but who so far oftener, and with such unmitigated hostility, pursues the assumptions, abstractions, generalities, and verbal legerdemain of the sophists ! Strange, but still more strange, that a notion so groundless should be entitled to plead in its behalf the authority of Lord Bacon, from whom the Latin words in the preceding sentence are taken, and whose scheme of logic, as applied to the contemplation of nature, is Platonic throughout, and differing only in the mode, which in Lord Bacon is dogmatic, that is, assertory, in Plato tentative, and (to adopt the Socratic phrase) obstetric. I am not the first, or even among the first, who have considered Bacon's studied depreciation of the ancients, with his silence, or worse than silence, concerning the merits of his contemporaries, as the least amiable, the least exhilarating, side in the character of our illustrious countryman. His detractions from the divine Plato it is more easy to explain than to justify or even to palliate; and that he has merely retaliated Aristotle's own unfair treatment of his predecessors and contemporaries, may lessen the pain, but should not blind us to the injustice of the aspersions on the name and works of that philosopher. The most eminent of our recent zoologists and mineralogists have acknowledged with respect, and even with expressions of wonder, the performances of Aristotle, as the first clearer and breaker-up of the ground in natural history. It is indeed scarcely possible to peruse

the treatise on colours,* falsely ascribed to Theophrastus, the scholar and successor of Aristotle, after a due consideration of the state and means of science at that time, without resenting the assertion, that he had utterly enslaved his investigations in natural history to his own system of logic (*logicæ suæ prorsus mancipavit*). Nor let it be forgotten that the sunny side of Lord Bacon's character is to be found neither in his inductions, nor in the application of his own method to particular *phænomena* or particular classes of physical facts, which are at least as crude for the age of Gilbert,† Galileo, and Kepler, as Aristotle's for that of Philip and Alexander. Nor is it to be found in his recommendation (which is wholly independent of his inestimable principles of scientific method) of tabular collections of particulars. Let any unprejudiced naturalist turn to Lord Bacon's questions and proposals for the investigation of single problems; to his Discourse on the Winds; or to the almost comical caricature of this scheme in the Method of improving Natural Philosophy, by Robert Hooke (the history of whose multifold inventions, and indeed of his whole philosophical life, is the best answer to the scheme, if a scheme so palpably impracticable needs any answer),—and

* The *περὶ χρωμάτων* is not now, I believe, considered genuine.—*Ed.*

† William Gilbert died in 1603. His works are *De Magnete*, &c. 1600, and *De Mundo*, &c. 1651.—*Ed.*

put it to his conscience, whether any desirable end could be hoped for from such a process; or inquire of his own experience, or historical recollections, whether any important discovery was ever made in this way.* For though Bacon never so far deviates from his own principles, as not to admonish the reader that the particulars are to be thus collected, only that by careful selection they may be concentrated into universals; yet so immense is their number, and so various and almost endless the relations in which each is to be separately considered, that the life of an antediluvian patriarch would have been expended, and his

* I refer the reader to Hooke's *Posthumous Works* (Hooke died in 1702.—*Ed.*) published under the auspices of the Royal Society, by their Secretary, Richard Waller, and especially to the pages from p. 22 to 42 inclusive, as containing the preliminary knowledges requisite or desirable for the naturalist, before he can form "even a foundation upon which any thing like a sound and stable theory can be constituted." As a small specimen of this appalling catalogue of preliminaries with which he is to make himself conversant, take the following:—The history of potters, tobacco-pipe-makers, glaziers, glass-grinders, looking-glass-makers or foilers, spectacle-makers and optic-glass-makers, makers of counterfeit pearl and precious stones, bugle-makers, lamp-blowers, colour-makers, colour-grinders, glass-painters, enamellers, varnishers, colour-sellers, painters, limners, picture-drawers, makers of baby-heads, of little bowling-stones or marbles, fustian-makers (*quære* whether poets are included in this trade), music-masters, tinsey-makers, and taggers;—the history of schoolmasters, writing-masters, printers, book-binders, stage-players, dancing-masters, and vaulters, apothecaries, surgeons, seamsters, butchers, barbers, laundresses, and cosmetics, &c. (the true nature of which being actually determined) will hugely facilitate our inquiries in philosophy."

strength and spirits wasted, in merely polling the votes, and long before he could have commenced the process of simplification, or have arrived in sight of the law which was to reward the toils of the over-tasked Psyche.*

I yield to none in grateful veneration of Lord Bacon's philosophical writings. I am proud of his very name, as a lover of knowledge; and as an Englishman, I am almost vain of it. But I may not permit the honest workings of national attachment to degenerate into the jealous and indiscriminate partiality of clan-ship. Unawed by such as praise and abuse by wholesale, I dare avow that there are points in the character of our Veru-

As a summary of Dr. R. Hooke's multifarious recipe for the growth of science may be fairly placed that of the celebrated Dr. Watts for the improvement of the mind, which was thought by Dr. Knox to be worthy of insertion in the *Elegant Extracts*, vol. ii. p. 456, under the head of

Directions concerning our Ideas. °

“Furnish yourselves with a rich variety of ideas. Acquaint yourselves with things ancient and modern; things natural, civil, and religious; things of your native land, and of foreign countries; things domestic and national; things present, past, and future; and above all, be well acquainted with God and yourselves; with animal nature, and the workings of your own spirits. Such a general acquaintance with things will be of very great advantage.”

* See the beautiful allegoric tale of Cupid and Psyche, in the original of Apuleius, (*De Asino aureo*, L. iv. v. vi.—*Ed.*) The tasks imposed on her by the jealousy of her mother-in-law, and the agency by which they are at length self-performed, are noble instances of that hidden wisdom, “where more is meant than meets the ear.”

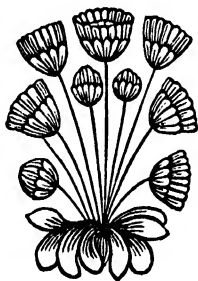
lam, from which I turn to the life and labours of John Kepler,* as from gloom to sunshine. The beginning and the close of his life were clouded by poverty and domestic troubles, while the intermediate years were comprised within the most tumultuous period of the history of his country, when the furies of religious and political discord had left neither eye, ear, nor heart for the muses. But Kepler seemed born to prove that true genius can overpower all obstacles. If he gives an account of his modes of proceeding, and of the views under which they first occurred to his mind, how unostentatiously and *in transitu*, as it were, does he introduce himself to our notice; and yet never fails to present the living germ out of which the genuine method, as the inner form of the tree of science, springs up! With what affectionate reverence does he express himself of his master and immediate predecessor, Tycho Brahe;—with what zeal does he vindicate his services against posthumous detraction! How often and how gladly does he speak of Copernicus;—and with what fervent tones of faith and consolation does he proclaim the historic fact that the great men of all ages have prepared the way for each other, as pioneers and heralds! Equally just to the ancients and to his contemporaries, how circumstantially, and with what exactness of detail, does Kepler demonstrate

* Born 1571, ten years after Lord Bacon: died 1630, four years after the death of Bacon.

that Euclid Copernicises—ὡς πρὸ τοῦ Κοπερνίκου κοπερνικίζει Εὐκλείδης,—how elegant the compliments which he addresses to Porta, and with what cordiality he thanks him for the invention of the *camera obscura*, as enlarging his views into the laws of vision ! But while I cannot avoid contrasting this generous enthusiasm with Lord Bacon's cold and invidious treatment of Gilbert, and his assertion that the works of Plato and Aristotle had been carried down the stream of time, like straws, by their levity alone, when things of weight and worth had sunk to the bottom;—still in the founder of a revolution, scarcely less important for the scientific, and even for the commercial, world than that of Luther for the world of religion and politics, we must allow much to the heat of protestation, much to the vehemence of hope, and much to the vividness of novelty. Still more must we attribute to the then existing and actual state of the Platonic and Peripatetic philosophies, or rather to the dreams or verbiage which then passed current as such. Had Bacon but attached to their proper authors the schemes and doctrines which he condemns, our illustrious countryman would, in this point, at least, have needed no apology. And surely no lover of truth, conversant with the particulars of Lord Bacon's life, with the very early, almost boyish, age at which he quitted the university, and the manifold occupations and anxieties in which his public and professional duties engaged, and his courtly,—alas ! his servile, prostitute, and mendi-

cant—ambition entangled him, in his after years, will be either surpris'd or offended, though I should avow my conviction, that he had derived his opinions of Plato and Aristotle from any source, rather than from a dispassionate and patient study of the originals themselves. At all events it will be no easy task to reconcile many passages in the *De Augmentis*, and the *Redargutio Philosophiarum*, with the author's own fundamental principles, as established in his *Novum Organum*; if we attach to the words the meaning which they may bear, or even, in some instances, the meaning which might appear to us, in the present age, more obvious; instead of the sense in which they were employed by the professors, whose false premises and barren methods Bacon was at that time controverting. And this historical interpretation is rendered the more necessary by his fondness for point and antithesis in his style, where we must often disturb the sound in order to arrive at the sense. But with these precautions;—and if, in collating the philosophical works of Lord Bacon with those of Plato, we, in both cases alike, separate the grounds and essential principles of their philosophic systems from the inductions themselves; no inconsiderable portion of which, in the British sage, as well as in the divine Athenian, is neither more nor less crude and erroneous than might be anticipated from the infant state of natural history, chemistry, and physiology, in their several ages; and if we moreover separate the principles from

their practical application, which in both is not seldom impracticable, and, in our countryman, not always reconcileable with the principles themselves ; — we shall not only extract that from each which is for all ages, and which constitutes their true systems of philosophy, but shall convince ourselves that they are radically one and the same system ; — in that, namely, which is of universal and imperishable worth, the science of method, and the grounds and conditions of the science of method.





ESSAY IX.

A great authority may be a poor proof, but it is an excellent presumption: and few things give a wise man a truer delight than to reconcile two great authorities, that had been commonly but falsely held to be dissonant.

STAPYLTON.

UNDER a deep impresson of the importance of the truths I have essayed to develope, I would fain remove every prejudice that does not originate in the heart rather than in the understanding. For truth, says the wise man, will not enter a malevolent spirit.

To offer or to receive names in lieu of sound arguments, is only less reprehensible than an ostentatious contempt of the great men of former ages; but we may well and wisely avail ourselves of authorities, in confirmation of truth, and above all, in the removal of prejudices founded on imperfect information. I do not see, therefore, how I can more appropriately conclude this first, explanatory and controversial section of the inquiry, than by a brief statement of our renowned countryman's own principles of method, conveyed for the greater part in his own words. Nor do I see, in what

more precise form I can recapitulate the substance of the doctrines asserted and vindicated in the preceding pages. For I rest my strongest pretensions to a calm and respectful perusal, in the first instance, on the fact, that I have only reproclaimed the coinciding precepts of the Athenian Verulam, and the British Plato—*genuinam scilicet Platonis dialecticem, et methodologiam principialem*

FRANCISCI DE VERULAMIO.

IN the first instance, Lord Bacon equally with myself demands what I have ventured to call the intellectual or mental initiative, as the motive and guide of every philosophical experiment; some well-grounded purpose, some distinct impression of the probable results, some self-consistent anticipation as the ground of the *prudens quæstio*, the forethoughtful query, which he affirms to be the prior half of the knowledge sought, *dimidium scientiæ*. With him, therefore, as with me, an idea is an experiment proposed, an experiment is an idea realized. For so, though in other words, he himself informs us: *neque id molimur tam instrumentis quam experimentis; etenim experimentorum longe major est subtilitas quam sensus ipseus, licet instrumentis exquisitis adjuti. De iis loquimur experimentis, quæ ad intentionem ejus quod quæritur perite et secundum artem excogitata et apposita sunt. Itaque perceptioni sensus immediatæ ac propriæ non multum tribuimus: sed eo rem deducimus, ut sensus tantum de experimento, experimentum de re, judicet.* This

last sentence is, as the attentive reader will have himself detected, one of those faulty verbal antitheses not unfrequent in Lord Bacon's writings. Pungent antitheses, and the analogies of wit in which the resemblance is too often more indebted to the double or equivocal sense of a word, than to any real conformity* in the thing or image, form the *dulcia vitia* of his style, the Dalilahs of our philosophical Samson. But in this instance, as indeed throughout all his works, the meaning is clear and evident;—namely, that the sense can apprehend, through the organs of sense, only the *phænomena* evoked by the experiment: *vis vero mentis ea, quæ experimentum excogitaverat, de re judicet*: that is, that power, which out of its own conceptions had shaped the experiment, must alone determine the true import of the *phænomena*. If again we ask, what it is which gives birth to the question, and then *ad intentionem quæstionis suæ experimentum excogitat, unde de re judicet*, the answer is,—*lux intellectus, lumen siccum*, the pure and impersonal reason, freed from all the various idols enumerated by our great legislator of science (*idola tribus, specus, fori, theatri*); that is, freed from the limits, the passions, the prejudices, the peculiar habits of the human understanding, natural or ac-

* Thus (to take the first instance that occurs), Bacon says, that some knowledges, like the stars, are so high that they give no light. Where the word, "high," means "deep or sublime," in the one case, and "distant" in the other.

quired ; but above all, pure from the arrogance, which leads man to take the forms and mechanism of his own mere reflective faculty, as the measure of nature and of Deity. In this indeed we find the great object both of Plato's and of Lord Bacon's labours. They both saw that there could be no hope of any fruitful and secure method, while forms, merely subjective, were presumed as the true and proper moulds of objective truth. This is the sense in which Lord Bacon uses the phrases, *intellectus humanus*, *mens hominis*, so profoundly and justly characterized in the preliminary essay to the *Novum Organum*.* And with all right and propriety did he so apply them : for this was, in fact, the sense in which the phrases were applied by the teachers, whom he is controverting ; by the doctors of the schools, and the visionaries of the laboratory. To adopt the bold but happy phrase of a late ingenious French writer, it is the *homme particulier*, as contrasted with *l'homme général*, against which, Heraclitus and Plato, among the ancients, and among the moderns, Bacon and Stewart (rightly understood), warn and pre-admonish the sincere inquirer. Most truly, and in strict consonance with his two great predecessors, does our immortal Verulam teach, that the human understanding, even independently of the causes that always, previously to its purification by philosophy, render it more or less turbid or uneven, *sicut speculum inæquale rerum ra-*

* *Distributio Operis*.—Ed.

dios ex figura et sectione propria immutat : * that our understanding not only reflects the objects subjectively, that is, substitutes for the inherent laws and properties of the objects the relations which the objects bear to its own particular constitution ; but that in all its conscious presentations and reflexes, it is itself only a *phænomenon* of the inner sense, and requires the same corrections as the appearances transmitted by the outward senses. But that there is potentially, if not actually, in every rational being, a somewhat, call it what you will, the pure reason, the spirit, *lumen siccum*, νοῦς, φῶς νοερόν, intellectual intuition, or the like,—and that in this are to be found the indispensable conditions of all science, and scientific research, whether meditative, contemplative, or experimental,—is often expressed, and every where supposed, by Lord Bacon. And that this is not only the right but the possible nature of the human mind, to which it is capable of being restored, is implied in the various remedies prescribed by him for its diseases, and in the various means of neutralizing or converting into useful instrumentality the imperfections which cannot be removed. There is a sublime truth contained in his favourite phrase, *idola intellectus*. He thus tells us, that the mind of man is an edifice not built with human hands, which needs only be purged of its idols and idolatrous services to become the temple of the true and living Light.

Nay, he has shown and established the true criterion between the ideas and the *idola* of the mind ; namely, that the former are manifested by their adequacy to those ideas in nature, which in and through them are contemplated. *Non leve quiddam interest inter humanæ mentis idola et divinæ mentis ideas, hoc est, inter placita quædam inania et veras signaturas atque impressiones factas in creaturis, prout inveniuntur.** Thus the difference, or rather distinction, between Plato and Lord Bacon is simply this : that philosophy being necessarily bipolar, Plato treats principally of the truth, as it manifests itself at the ideal pole, as the science of intellect (*de mundo intelligibili*) ; while Bacon confines himself, for the most part, to the same truth, as it is manifested at the other or material pole, as the science of nature (*de mundo sensibili*). It is as necessary, therefore, that Plato should direct his inquiries chiefly to those objective truths that exist in and for the intellect alone, the images and representatives of which we construct for ourselves by figure, number, and word ; as that Lord Bacon should attach his main concern to the truths which have their signatures in nature, and which (as he himself plainly and often asserts) may indeed be revealed to us through and with, but never by the senses, or the faculty of sense. Otherwise, indeed, instead of being more objective than the former (which they are not in any sense, both being in this

* *Nov. Org. P. II. Summ. 23.—Ed.*

respect the same), they would be less so, and, in fact, incapable of being insulated from the *idola tribus* (*quæ*) *sunt fundata in ipsa natura humana, atque in ipsa tribu seu gente hominum. Falso enim asseritur sensum humanum esse mensuram rerum; quin contra, omnes perceptiones tam sensus quam mentis, sunt ex analogia hominis, non ex analogia universi.** Hence too, it will not surprise us, that Plato so often calls ideas living laws, in which the mind has its whole true being and permanence; or that Bacon, *vice versa*, names the laws of nature ideas; and represents what I have in a former part of this disquisition called facts of science and central *phænomena*, as signatures, impressions, and symbols of ideas. A distinguishable power self-affirmed, and seen in its unity with the Eternal Essence, is, according to Plato, an idea: and the discipline, by which the human mind is purified from its idols (*εἰδωλα*), and raised to the contemplation of ideas, and thence to the secure and ever-progressive, though never-ending, investigation of truth and reality by scientific method, comprehends what the same philosopher so highly extols under the title of dialectic. According to Lord Bacon, as describing the same truth seen from the opposite point, and applied to natural philosophy, an idea would be defined as—*intuitio sive inventio, quæ in perceptione sensus non est (ut quæ puræ et sicci luminis intellectioni est propria) idearum divinæ mentis, prout in*

* *Nov. Org. P. II. Summ. 41.—Ed.*

creaturis per signaturas suas sese patefaciant. “That (saith the judicious Hooker) which doth assign unto each thing the kind, that which doth moderate the force and power, that which doth appoint the form and measure, of working, the same we term a law.”*

We can now, as men furnished with fit and respectable credentials, proceed to the historic importance and practical application of method, under the deep and solemn conviction, that without this guiding light neither can the sciences attain to their full evolution, as the organs of one vital and harmonious body, nor that most weighty and concerning of all sciences, the science of education, be understood in its first elements, much less display its powers, as the *nifus formativus*† of social man, as the ap-

* *Eccl. Pol. B. I. 2.—Ed.*

† So our medical writers commonly translate Professor Blumenbach’s *Bildungstrieb*, the *vis plastica*, or *vis vitæ formatrix*, of the elder physiologists, and the life or living principle of John Hunter, the profoundest, I had almost said the only, physiological philosopher of the latter half of the preceding century. For in what other sense can we understand either his assertion, that this principle or agent is independent of organization, which yet it animates, sustains, and repairs, or the purport of that magnificent commentary on his system, the Hunterian Museum? The Hunterian idea of a life or vital principle independent of the organization, yet in each organ working instinctively towards its preservation, as the ants or termites in repairing the nests of their own fabrication, demonstrates that John Hunter did not, as Stahl and others had done, individualize, or make an *hypostasis* of the principles of life, as a something manifestable *per se*, and consequently itself a *phenomenon*; the latency of which was to be attributed to accidental, or at

pointed protoplast of true humanity. Never can society comprehend fully, and in its whole practical extent, the permanent distinction, and the occasional

least contingent causes, as for example, the limits or imperfection of our senses, or the inaptness of the *media*; but that herein he philosophized in the spirit of the purest Newtonians, who in like manner refused to hypostatize the law of gravitation into an ether, which even if its existence were conceded, would need another gravitation for itself. The Hunterian position is a genuine philosophic idea, the negative test of which as of all ideas is, that it is equi-distant from an *ens logicum* or abstraction, an *ens representativum* or generalization, and an *ens phantasticum* or imaginary thing or *phenomenon*.

Is not the progressive enlargement, the boldness without temerity, of chirurgical views and chirurgical practice since Hunter's time to the present day, attributable, in almost every instance, to his substitution of what may perhaps be called experimental dynamics, for the mechanical notions, or the less injurious traditional empiricism, of his predecessors? And this, too, though the light is still struggling through a cloud, and though it is shed on many who see either dimly or not at all the idea from which it is e-radiated? Willingly would I designate, what I have elsewhere called the mental initiative, by some term less obnoxious to the anti-Platonic reader, than this of idea — obnoxious, I mean, as soon as any precise and peculiar sense is attached to the sound. Willingly would I exchange the term, might it be done without sacrifice of the import: and did I not see, too, clearly, that it is the meaning, not the word, which is the object of that aversion, which, fleeing from inward alarm, tries to shelter itself in outward contempt; which is at once folly and a stumbling-block to the partizans of a crass and sensual materialism, the advocates of the *nihil nisi ab extra*:—

They shrink in, as moles,
Nature's mute monks, live mandrakes of the ground,
Creep back from light, then listen for its sound;
See but to dread, and dread they know not why,
The natural alien of their negative eye!

Poetical Works, I. p. 259.

contrast, between cultivation and civilization ; never can it attain to a due insight into the momentous fact, fearfully as it has been, and even now is, exemplified in a neighbour country, that a nation can never be a too cultivated, but may easily become an over-civilized, race : never, I repeat, can this sanative and preventive knowledge take up its abode among us, while we oppose ourselves voluntarily to that grand prerogative of our nature ; a hungering and thirsting after truth, as the appropriate end of our intelligential, and its point of union with our moral, nature ; but therefore after truth, that must be found within us before it can be intelligibly reflected back on the mind from without, and a religious regard to which is indispensable, both as guide and object to the just formation of the human being, poor and rich : while, in a word, we are blind to the master-light, which I have already presented in various points of view, and recommended by whatever is of highest authority with the venerators of the ancient, and the adherents of modern, philosophy.



ESSAY X.

Πολυμαθὴν νόον οὐ διδάσκει. — Εἶναι γὰρ ἐν τῷ σοφῶν, ἐπίσταςθαι γνώ-
μην ἢ τε ἐγκυβερνήσει πάντα διὰ πάντων. HERACLITUS.*

* The effective education of the reason is not to be supplied by multifarious acquirements : for there is but one knowledge that merits to be called wisdom, a knowledge that is one with a law which shall govern all in and through all.

Historical and Illustrative.

HERE is still preserved in the Royal Observatory at Richmond the model of a bridge, constructed by the late justly celebrated Mr. Atwood (at that time, however, in the decline of life), in the confidence, that he had explained the wonderful properties of the arch as resulting from the compound action of simple wedges, or of the rectilinear solids of which the material arch was composed ; and of which supposed discovery, his model was to exhibit ocular proof. Accordingly, he took a sufficient number of wedges of brass highly polished. Arranging these at first on a skeleton arch of wood, he then removed this scaffolding or support ; and the bridge not only stood firm, without any cement between the squares, but he could take away any given por-

* *Diogen. Laert.* ix. c. 1. f. 2.—*Ed.*

tion of them, as a third or a half, and appending a correspondent weight, at either side, the remaining part stood as before. Our venerable sovereign, who is known to have had a particular interest and pleasure in all works and discoveries of mechanic science or ingenuity, looked at it for awhile steadfastly, and, as his manner was, with quick and broken expressions of praise and courteous approbation, in the form of answers to his own questions. At length turning to the constructor, he said, "But, Mr. Atwood, you have presumed the figure. You have put the arch first in this wooden skeleton. Can you build a bridge of the same wedges in any other figure? A strait bridge, or with two lines touching at the apex? If not, is it not evident, that the bits of brass derive their continuance in the present position from the property of the arch, and not the arch from the property of the wedge?" The objection was fatal, the justice of the remark not to be resisted; and I have ever deemed it a forcible illustration of the Aristotelian axiom, with respect to all just reasoning, that the whole is of necessity prior to its parts; nor can I conceive a more apt illustration of the scientific principles I have already laid down.

All method supposes a union of several things to a common end, either by disposition, as in the works of man; or by convergence, as in the operations and products of nature. That we acknowledge a method, even in the latter, results from the religious instinct which bids us "find tongues in

trees ; books in the running streams ; sermons in stones ; and good (that is, some useful end answering to some good purpose) in every thing." In a self-conscious and thence reflecting being, no instinct can exist without engendering the belief of an object corresponding to it, either present or future, real or capable of being realized ; much less the instinct, in which humanity itself is grounded ; --that by which, in every act of conscious perception ; we at once identify our being with that of the world without us, and yet place ourselves in contra-distinction to that world. Least of all can this mysterious pre-disposition exist without evolving a belief that the productive power,* which in nature acts as nature, is essentially one (that is, of

* Obscure from too great compression. The sense is, that the productive power, or *vis naturans*, which in the sensible world, or *natura naturata*, is what we mean by the word, nature, when we speak of the same as an agent, is essentially one, &c. In other words, idea and law are the subjective and objective poles of the same magnet, that is, of the same living and energizing reason. What an idea is in the subject, that is, in the mind, is a law in the object, that is, in nature. But throughout these essays the want of illustrative examples, and varied exposition is, I am conscious, the main defect, and it was occasioned by the haunting dread of being tedious. But O! the cold water that was thrown on me, chiefly from those from whom I ought to have received warmth and encouragement! "Who, do you expect, will read this," &c.—But, vanity as it may appear, it is nevertheless true, and uttered with feelings the most unlike those of self-conceit, that it has been my mistake through life to be looking up to those whom I ought to have been looking at, nay (in some instances) down upon. —June 23rd, 1829.

one kind) with the intelligence, which is in the human mind above nature; however disfigured this belief may become by accidental forms or accompaniments, and though like heat in the thawing of ice, it may appear only in its effects. So universally has this conviction leavened the very substance of all discourse, that there is no language on earth in which a man can abjure it as a prejudice, without employing terms and conjunctions that suppose its reality, with a feeling very different from that which accompanies a figurative or metaphorical use of words. In all aggregates of construction therefore, which we contemplate as wholes, whether as integral parts or as a system, we assume an intention, as the initiative, of which the end is the correlative.

Hence proceeds the introduction of final causes in the works of nature equally as in those of man. Hence their assumption, as constitutive and explanatory, by the mass of mankind; and the employment of the presumption, as an auxiliary and regulative principle, by the enlightened naturalist, whose office it is to seek, discover, and investigate the efficient causes. Without denying, that to resolve the efficient into the final may be the ultimate aim of philosophy, he, of good right, resists the substitution of the latter for the former, as premature, presumptuous, and preclusive of all science; well aware, that those sciences have been most progressive, in which this confusion has been either precluded by the nature of the science itself, as in pure

mathematics, or avoided by the good sense of its cultivator. Yet even he admits a telcological ground in physics and physiology; that is, the presumption of a something analogous to the casualty of the human will, by which, without assigning to nature, as nature, a conscious purpose, he may yet distinguish her agency from a blind and lifeless mechanism. Even he admits its use, and, in many instances, its necessity, as a regulative principle; as a ground of anticipation, for the guidance of his judgment and for the direction of his observation and experiment;—briefly in all that preparatory process, which the French language so happily expresses by *s'orienter*, to find out the east for one's self. When the naturalist contemplates the structure of a bird, for instance, the hollow cavity of the bones, the position of the wings for motion, and of the tail for steering its course, and the like, he knows indeed that there must be a correspondent mechanism, as the *nexus effectivus*; but he knows, likewise, that this will no more explain the particular existence of the bird, than the principles of cohesion could inform him why of two buildings one is a palace and the other a church. Nay, it must not be overlooked, that the assumption of the *nexus effectivus* itself originates in the mind, as one of the laws under which alone it can reduce the manifold of the impression from without into unity, and thus contemplate it as one thing; and could never (as hath been clearly proved by Mr. Hume) have been derived from outward experi-

ence, in which it is indeed presupposed as a necessary condition. *Notio nexus causalis non oritur, sed supponitur, a sensibus.* Between the purpose and the end the component parts are included, and thence receive their position and character as means, that is, parts contemplated as parts. It is in this sense, that I will affirm that the parts, as means to an end, derive their position, and therein their qualities (or character)—nay, I dare add, their very existence, as particular things,—from the antecedent method, or self-organizing purpose; upon which therefore I have dwelt so long.

I am aware that it is with our cognitions as with our children. There is a period in which the method of nature is working for them; a period of aimless activity and unregulated accumulation, during which it is enough if we can preserve them in health and out of harm's way. Again, there is a period of orderliness, of circumspection, of discipline, in which we purify, separate, define, select, arrange, and settle the nomenclature of communication. There is also a period of dawning and twilight, a period of anticipation, affording trials of strength. And all these, both in the growth of the sciences and in the mind of a rightly-educated individual, will precede the attainment of a scientific method. But, notwithstanding this, unless the importance of the latter be felt and acknowledged, unless its attainment be looked forward to and from the very beginning prepared for, there is little hope and small chance that any education

will be conducted aright; or will ever prove in reality worth the name.

Much labour, much wealth may have been expended, yet the final result will too probably warrant the sarcasm of the Scythian traveller: *Vae! quantum nihili!* and draw from a wise man the earnest recommendation of a full draught from Lethe, as the first and indispensable preparative for the waters of the true Helicon. Alas! how many examples are now present to my memory, of young men the most anxiously and expensively be-school-mastered, be-tutored, be-lectured, any thing but educated; who have received arms and ammunition, instead of skill, strength, and courage; varnished rather than polished; perilously over-civilized, and most pitiably uncultivated! And all from inattention to the method dictated by nature herself, to the simple truth, that as the forms in all organized existence, so must all true and living knowledge proceed from within; that it may be trained, supported, fed, excited, but can never be infused or impressed.

Look back on the history of the sciences. Review the method in which providence has brought the more favoured portion of mankind to their present state. Lord Bacon has justly remarked, *antiquitas sæculi juvenus mundi** — antiquity of time is the youth of the world and of science. In the childhood of the human race, its education

* Advancement of Learning, B. i.—E d.

commenced with the cultivation of the moral sense; the object proposed being such as the mind only could apprehend, and the principle of obedience being placed in the will. The appeal in both was made to the inward man. *Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God; so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear.* The solution of *phænomena* can never be derived from *phænomena*. Upon this ground, the writer of the epistle to the Hebrews (c. xi.) is not less philosophical than eloquent. The aim, the method throughout was, in the first place, to awaken, to cultivate, and to mature the truly human in human nature, in and through itself, or as independently as possible of the notices derived from sense, and of the motives that had reference to the sensations; till the time should arrive when the senses themselves might be allowed to present symbols and attestations of truths, learnt previously from deeper and inner sources. Thus the first period of the education of our race was evidently assigned to the cultivation of humanity itself, or of that in man, which of all known embodied creatures he alone possesses, the pure reason, as designed to regulate the will. And by what method was this done? First, by the excitement of the idea of their Creator as a spirit, of an idea which they were strictly forbidden to realize to themselves under any image; and, secondly, by the injunction of obedience to the will of a super-sensual Being. Nor did the method

stop here. For, unless we are equally to contradict Moses and the New Testament, in compliment to the paradox of a Warburton, the rewards of their obedience were placed at a distance. For the time present they equally with us were to endure, as seeing him who is invisible. Their bodies they were taught to consider as fleshly tents, which as pilgrims they were bound to pitch wherever the invisible Director of their route should appoint, however barren or thorny the spot might appear. *Few and evil have the days of the years of my life been,** says the aged Israel. But that life was but his pilgrimage, and he trusted in the promises.

Thus were the very first lessons in the divine school assigned to the cultivation of the reason and of the will; or rather of both as united in faith. The common and ultimate object of the will and of the reason was purely spiritual, and to be present in the mind of the disciple—μόνον ἐν ἰδέᾳ, μηδαμῇ εἰδωλικῶς, that is, in the idea alone, and never as an image or imagination. The means too, by which the idea was to be excited, as well as the symbols by which it was to be communicated, were to be, as far as possible, intellectual.

Those, on the contrary, who wilfully chose a mode opposite to this method, who determined to shape their convictions and deduce their knowledge from without, by exclusive observation of outward and sensible things as the only realities,

* Gen. xlvii. 9.

became, it appears, rapidly civilized. They built cities, invented musical instruments, were artificers in brass and in iron, and refined on the means of sensual gratification, and the conveniencies of courtly intercourse. They became the great masters of the agreeable, which fraternized readily with cruelty and rapacity; these being, indeed, but alternate moods of the same sensual selfishness. Thus, both before and after the flood, the vicious of mankind receded from all true cultivation, as they hurried towards civilization. Finally, as it was not in their power to make themselves wholly beasts, or to remain without a semblance of religion; and yet continuing faithful to their original maxim, and determined to receive nothing as true, but what they derived, or believed themselves to derive from their senses, or (in modern phrase) what they could prove *a posteriori*, they became idolaters of the heavens and the material elements. From the harmony of operation they concluded a certain unity of nature and design, but were incapable of finding in the facts any proof of a unity of person. They did not, in this respect, pretend to find what they must themselves have first assumed. Having thrown away the clusters, which had grown in the vineyard of revelation, they could not, as later reasoners, by being born in a Christian country, have been enabled to do, hang the grapes on thorns, and then pluck them as the native growth of the bushes. But the men of sense of the patriarchal times, neglecting reason and having

rejected faith, adopted what the facts seemed to involve and the most obvious analogies to suggest. They acknowledged a whole bee-hive of natural gods; but while they were employed in building a temple* consecrated to the material heavens, it pleased divine wisdom to send on them a confusion of lip, accompanied with the usual embitterment of controversy, where all parties are in the wrong, and the grounds of quarrel are equally plausible on all sides. As the modes of error are endless, the hundred forms of polytheism had each its group of partisans who, hostile or alienated, thenceforward formed separate tribes kept aloof from each other by their ambitious leaders. Hence arose, in the course of a few centuries, the diversity of languages, which has sometimes been confounded with the miraculous event that was indeed its first and principal, though remote, cause.

* I am far from being a Hutchinsonian, nor have I found much to respect in the twelve volumes of Hutchinson's works, either as biblical comment or natural philosophy; though I give him credit for orthodoxy and good intentions. But his interpretation of the first nine verses of Genesis xi. seems not only rational in itself, and consistent with after accounts of the sacred historian, but proved to be the literal sense of the Hebrew text. His explanation of the cherubim is pleasing and plausible: I dare not say more. Those who would wish to learn the most important points of the Hutchinsonian doctrine in the most favourable form, and in the shortest possible space, I can refer to Duncan Forbes's Letter to a Bishop. If my own judgment did not withhold my assent, I should never be ashamed of a conviction holden, professed, and advocated by so good and wise a man as Duncan Forbes.

Following next, and as the representative of the youth and approaching manhood of the human intellect, we have ancient Greece, from Orpheus, Linus, Musæus, and the other mythological bards, or perhaps the brotherhoods impersonated under those names,* to the time when the republics lost their independence, and their learned men sank into copyists and commentators of the works of their forefathers. That I include these as educated under a distinct providential, though not miraculous, dispensation, will surprise no one, who reflects that in whatever has a permanent operation on the destinies and intellectual condition of mankind at large—that in all which has been manifestly employed as a co-agent in the mightiest revolution of the moral world, the propagation of the gospel; and in the intellectual progress of mankind, in the restoration of philosophy, science, and the ingenuous arts—it were irreligion not to acknowledge the hand of divine providence. The periods, too, join on to each other. The earliest Greeks took up the religious and lyrical poetry of

* “I have no doubt whatever that *Homer* is a mere concrete name for the rhapsodies of the *Iliad*. Of course there was *a* Homer, and twenty besides. * * * * I have the firmest conviction that Homer is a mere traditional synonyme with, or figure for, the *Iliad*. You cannot conceive for a moment, any thing about the poet, as you call him, apart from that poem. Difference in men there was in degree, but not in kind; one man was, perhaps, a better poet than another; but he was a poet upon the same ground and with the same feelings as the rest. *Table Talk*, 67 * * 271. 2nd. edit.—*Ed.*

the Hebrews ; and the schools of the prophets were, however partially and imperfectly, represented by the mysteries, derived through the corrupt channel of the Phœnicians. With these secret schools of physiological theology the mythical poets were doubtless in connection ; and it was these schools, which prevented polytheism from producing all its natural barbarizing effects. The mysteries and the mythical hymns and pæans shaped themselves gradually into epic poetry and history on the one hand, and into the ethical tragedy and philosophy on the other. Under their protection, and that of a youthful liberty secretly controlled by a species of internal theocracy, the sciences and the sterner kinds of the fine arts, namely, architecture and statuary, grew up together ;—followed, indeed, by painting, but a statuesque and austere idealized painting, which did not degenerate into mere copies of the sense, till the process, for which Greece existed, had been completed. Contrast the rapid progress and perfection of all the products, which owe their existence and character to the mind's own acts, intellectual or imaginative, with the rudeness of their application to the investigation of physical laws and *phænomena* : then contemplate the Greeks (Γραῖοι αἰὲ παῖδες) as representing a portion only of the education of man ; and the conclusion is inevitable.

In the education of the mind of the race, as in that of the individual, each different age and pur-

pose requires different objects and different means; though all dictated by the same principle, tending toward the same end, and forming consecutive parts of the same method. But if the scale taken be sufficiently large to neutralize or render insignificant the disturbing forces of accident, the degree of success is the best criterion by which to appreciate, both the wisdom of the general principle, and the fitness of the particular objects to the given epoch or period. Now it is a fact, for the greater part of universal acceptance, and attested as to the remainder by all that is of highest fame and authority, by the great, wise, and good, during a space of at least seventeen centuries—weighed against whom the opinions of a few distinguished individuals, or the fashion of a single age, must be holden light in the balance,—it is a fact, I say, that whatever could be educed by the mind out of its own essence, by attention to its own acts and laws of action, or as the products of the same; and whatever likewise could be reflected from material masses transformed as it were into mirrors, the excellence of which is to reveal, in the least possible degree, their own original forms and natures;—all these, whether arts or sciences, the ancient Greeks carried to an almost ideal perfection: while in the application of their skill and science to the investigation of the laws of the sensible world, and the qualities and composition of material concretes, chemical, mechanical, or organic, their essays were crude and im-

prosperous, compared with those of the moderns during the early morning of their strength, and even at the first re-ascension of the light. But still more striking will the difference appear, if we contrast the physiological schemes and fancies of the Greeks with their own discoveries in the region of the pure intellect, and with their still unrivalled success in the arts of imagination. In the aversion of their great men from any practical use of their philosophic discoveries, as in the well-known instance of Archimedes. the soul of the world was at work ; and the few exceptions were but a rush of billows driven shoreward by some chance gust before the hour of tide, instantly retracted, and leaving the sands bare and soundless long after the momentary glitter had been lost in evaporation.

The third period, that of the Romans, was devoted to the preparations for preserving, propagating and realizing the labours of the preceding ; to war, empire, law. To this we may refer the defect of all originality in the Latin poets and philosophers, on the one hand, and on the other, the predilection of the Romans for astrology, magic, divination, in all its forms. It was the Roman instinct to appropriate by conquest and to give fixure by legislation. And it was the bewilderment and prematurity of the same instinct which restlessly impelled them to materialize the ideas of the Greek philosophers, and to render them practical by superstitious uses.

Thus the Hebrews may be regarded as the fixed mid point of the living line, toward which the Greeks as the ideal pole, and the Romans as the material, were ever approximating ; till the coincidence and final synthesis took place in Christianity, of which the Bible is the law, and Christendom the *phænomenon*. So little confirmation from history, from the process of education planned and conducted by unerring Providence, do those theorists receive, who would at least begin (too many, alas ! both begin and end) with the objects of the senses ; as if nature herself had not abundantly performed this part of the task, by continuous, irresistible enforcements of attention to her presence, to the direct beholding, to the apprehension and observation, of the objects that stimulate the senses ;—as if the cultivation of the mental powers, by methodical exercise of their own forces, were not the securest means of forming the true correspondents to them in the functions of comparison, judgment, and interpretation.



ESSAY. XI.

Sapimus animo, fruimur anima : sine animo anima est debilis.
L. Accii Fragmenta.

AS there are two wants connatural to man, so are there two main directions of human activity, pervading in modern times the whole civilized world ; and constituting and sustaining that nationality which yet it is their tendency, and, more or less, their effect, to transcend and to moderate, — trade and literature. These were they, which, after the dismemberment of the old Roman world, gradually reduced the conquerors and the conquered at once into several nations and a common Christendom. The natural law of increase and the instincts of family may produce tribes, and, under rare and peculiar circumstances, settlements and neighbourhoods ; and conquest may form empires. But without trade and literature, mutually commingled, there can be no nation ; without commerce and science, no bond of nations. As the one hath for its object the wants of the body, real or artificial, the desires for which are for the greater part, nay, as far as the origination of trade and commerce is

concerned, altogether excited from without ; so the other has for its origin, as well as for its object, the wants of the mind, the gratification of which is a natural and necessary condition of its growth and sanity. And the man (or the nation, considered according to its predominant character as one man) may be regarded under these circumstances, as acting in two forms of method, inseparably co-existent, yet producing very different effects accordingly as one or the other obtains the primacy ; the senses, the memory, and the understanding, (that is, the retentive, reflective, and judicial functions of his mind) being common to both methods. As is the rank assigned to each in the theory and practice of the governing classes, and, according to its prevalence in forming the foundation of their public habits and opinions, so will be the outward and inward life of the people at large : such will the nation be. In tracing the epochs, and alternations of their relative sovereignty or subjection, consists the philosophy of history. In the power of distinguishing and appreciating their several results consists the historic sense. And that under the ascendancy of the mental and moral character the commercial relations may thrive to the utmost desirable point, while the reverse is ruinous to both, and sooner or later effectuates the fall or debasement of the country itself—this is the richest truth obtained for mankind by historic research ; though unhappily it is the truth, to which a rich and commercial nation listens with most reluctance

and receives with least faith. Where the brain and the immediate conductors of its influence remain healthy and vigorous, the defects and diseases of the eye will most often admit either of a cure or a substitute. And so is it with the outward prosperity of a state, where the well-being of the people possesses the primacy in the aims of the governing classes, and in the public feeling. But what avails the perfect state of the eye,

Though clear
To outward view of blemish or of spot,*

where the optic nerve is paralyzed by a pressure on the brain? And even so is it not only with the well-being, but ultimately with the prosperity of a people, where the former is considered (if it be considered at all) as subordinate and secondary to wealth and revenue.

In the pursuits of commerce the man is called into action from without, in order to appropriate the outward world, as far as he can bring it within his reach, to the purposes of his senses and sensual nature. His ultimate end is appearance and enjoyment. Where on the other hand the nurture and evolution of humanity is the final aim, there will soon be seen a general tendency toward, an earnest seeking after, some ground common to the world and to man, therein to find the one principle of permanence and identity, the rock of strength and refuge, to which the soul may cling amid the

* Milton, Sonnet to Cyriack Skinner.—*Ed.*

fleeting surge-like objects of the senses. Disturbed as by the obscure quickening of an inward birth; made restless by swarming thoughts, that, like bees when they first miss the queen and mother of the hive, with vain discurſion ſeek each in the other what is the common need of all; man ſallies forth into nature—in nature, as in the ſhadows and reflections of a clear river, to diſcover the originals of the forms preſented to him in his own intellect. Over theſe ſhadows, as if they were the ſubſtantial powers and preſiding ſpirits of the ſtream, Narciſſus-like, he hangs delighted: till finding nowhere a repreſentative of that free agency which yet is a fact of immediate conſciouſneſs ſanctioned and made fearfully ſignificant by his prophetic conſcience, he learns at laſt that what he ſeeks he has left behind, and that he but lengthens the diſtance as he prolongs the ſearch. Under the tutorage of ſcientific analysis, haply firſt given to him by expreſs revelation,

E cælo deſcendit, ἑνὶ θεῷ ſεαυτὸν,

he ſeparates the relations that are wholly the creatures of his own abſtracting and comparing intellect, and at once diſcovers and recoils from the diſcovery, that the reality, the objective truth, of the objects he has been adoring, derives its whole and ſole evidence from an obſcure ſenſation, which he is alike unable to reſiſt or to comprehend, which compels him to contemplate as without and inde-

pendent of himself what yet he could not contemplate at all, were it not a modification of his own being.

Earth fills her lap with pleasures of her own ;
 Yearnings she hath in her own natural kind,
 And, even with something of a mother's mind,
 And no unworthy aim,
 The homely nurse doth all she can
 To make her foster-child, her inmate man,
 Forget the glories he hath known,
 And that imperial palace whence he came.

* * * *

O joy ! that in our embers
 Is something that doth live,
 That nature yet remembers
 What was so fugitive !

The thought of our past years in me doth breed
 Perpetual benedictions : not indeed
 For that which is most worthy to be blest ;
 Delight and liberty, the simple creed
 Of childhood, whether busy or at rest,
 With new-fledged hope still fluttering in his breast :—
 Not for these I raise

The song of thanks and praise ;
 But for those obstinate questionings
 Of sense and outward things,
 Fallings from us, vanishings ;
 Blank misgivings of a creature
 Moving about in worlds not realized,
 High instincts, before which our mortal nature
 Did tremble like a guilty thing surprized !

But for those first affections,
 Those shadowy recollections,
 Which, be they what they may,
 Are yet the fountain light of all our day,
 Are yet a master light of all our seeing ;
 Uphold us—cherish—and have power to make
 Our noisy years seem moments in the being
 Of the eternal silence : truths that wake,

To perish never ;
 Which neither littlefness, nor mad endeavour,

Nor man nor boy,
 Nor all that is at enmity with joy,
 Can utterly abolish or destroy !
 Hence, in a season of calm weather,
 Though inland far we be,
 Our souls have light of that immortal sea
 Which brought us hither ;
 Can in a moment travel thither—
 And see the children sport upon the shore,
 And hear the mighty waters rolling evermore.

WORDSWORTH.¹

Long indeed will man strive to satisfy the inward
 querist with the phrase, laws of nature. But though
 the individual may rest content with the seemingly
 metaphor, the race cannot. If a law of nature be
 a mere generalization, it is included in the above

* *Intimations of immortality from recollections of early childhood.*—*Ed.* During my residence in Rome I had the pleasure of reciting this sublime ode to the illustrious Baron Von Humboldt, then the Prussian minister at the papal court, and now at the court of St. James. By those who knew and honoured both the brothers, the talents of the ambassador were considered equal to those of the scientific traveller, his judgment superior. I can only say, that I know few Englishmen, whom I could compare with him in the extensive knowledge and just appreciation of English literature and its various epochs. He listened to the ode with evident delight, and as evidently not without surprise, and at the close of the recitation exclaimed, "And is this the work of a living English poet? I should have attributed it to the age of Elizabeth, not that I recollect any writer, whose style it resembles; but rather with wonder, that so great and original a poet should have escaped my notice."—Often as I repeat passages from it to myself, I recur to the words of Dante:

*Canzon! io credo, che faranno radi
 Color che tua ragion intendan bene:
 Tanto lor parli faticoso ed alto.*

as an act of the mind. But if it be other and more, and yet manifestable only in and to an intelligent spirit, it must in act and substance be itself spiritual : for things utterly heterogeneous can have no intercommunion. In order therefore to the recognition of himself in nature man must first learn to comprehend nature in himself, and its laws in the ground of his own existence. Then only can he reduce *phænomena* to principles ; then only will he have achieved the method, the self-unravelling clue, which alone can securely guide him to the conquest of the former ;—when he has discovered in the basis of their union the necessity of their differences, in the principle of their continuance the solution of their changes. It is the idea alone of the common centre, of the universal law, by which all power manifests itself in opposite yet interdependent forces—(ἡ γὰρ δυὰς αἰὲν παρὰ μονάδι κάθεται, καὶ νοεραῖς ἀσράπτει τομαῖς)—which enlightening inquiry, multiplying experiment, and at once inspiring humility and perseverance will lead him to comprehend gradually and progressively the relation of each to the other, of each to all, and of all to each.

Imagine the unlettered African, or rude yet mus- ing Indian, poring over an illuminated manuscript of the inspired volume, with the vague yet deep impresson that his fates and fortunes are in some unknown manner connected with its contents. Every tint, every group of characters, has its feveral dream. Say that after long and dissatisfying toils, he begins to sort, first the paragraphs that

appear to resemble each other, then the lines, the words—nay, that he has at length discovered that the whole is formed by the recurrence and interchanges of a limited number of cyphers, letters, marks, and points, which, however, in the very height and utmost perfection of his attainment, he makes twentyfold more numerous than they are, by classing every different form of the same character, intentional or accidental, as a separate element. And the whole is without soul or substance, a talisman of superstition, a mockery of science : or employed perhaps at last to feather the arrows of death, or to shine and flutter amid the plumes of savage vanity. The poor Indian too truly represents the state of learned and systematic ignorance—arrangement guided by the light of no leading idea, mere orderliness without method.

But see ! the friendly missionary arrives. He explains to him the nature of written words, translates them for him into his native sounds, and thence into the thoughts of his heart—how many of these thoughts then first evolved into consciousness, which yet the awakening disciple receives, and not as aliens ! Henceforward, the book is unsealed for him ; the depth is opened out ; he communes with the spirit of the volume as with a living oracle. The words become transparent, and he sees them as though he saw them not.

I have thus delineated the two great directions of man and society with their several objects and ends. Concerning the conditions and principles

of method appertaining to each, I have affirmed (for the facts hitherto adduced have been rather for illustration than for evidence, to make the position distinctly understood rather than to enforce the conviction of its truth;) that in both there must be a mental antecedent; but that in the one it may be an image or conception received through the senses, and originating from without, the inspiring passion or desire being alone the immediate and proper offspring of the mind; while in the other the initiative thought, the intellectual seed, must itself have its birth-place within, whatever excitement from without may be necessary for its germination. Will the soul thus awakened neglect or undervalue the outward and conditional causes of her growth? Far rather, might I dare borrow a wild fancy from the Mantuan bard, or the poet of Arno, will it be with her, as if a stem, or trunk, suddenly endued with sense and reflection, should contemplate its green shoots, their leaflets and budding blossoms, wondered at as then first noticed, but welcomed nevertheless as its own growth: while yet with undiminished gratitude, and a deepened sense of dependency, it would bless the dews and the sunshine from without, deprived of the awakening and fostering excitement of which, its own productivity would have remained for ever hidden from itself, or felt only as the obscure trouble of a baffled instinct.

Haft thou ever raised thy mind to the consideration of existence, in and by itself, as the mere

act of existing? Hast thou ever said to thyself thoughtfully, It is! heedless in that moment, whether it were a man before thee, or a flower, or a grain of sand,—without reference, in short, to this or that particular mode or form of existence? If thou hast indeed attained to this, thou wilt have felt the presence of a mystery, which must have fixed thy spirit in awe and wonder. The very words, — There is nothing! or, — There was *a* time, when there was nothing! are self-contradictory. There is that within us which repels the proposition with as full and instantaneous a light, as if it bore evidence against the fact in the right of its own eternity.

Not to be, then, is impossible: to be, incomprehensible. If thou hast mastered this intuition of absolute existence, thou wilt have learnt likewise, that it was this, and no other, which in the earlier ages seized the nobler minds, the elect among men, with a sort of sacred horror. This it was which first caused them to feel within themselves a something ineffably greater than their own individual nature. It was this which, raising them aloft, and projecting them to an ideal distance from themselves, prepared them to become the lights and awakening voices of other men, the founders of law and religion, the educators and foster-gods of mankind. The power, which evolved this idea of being, being in its essence, being limitless, comprehending its own limits in its dilatation, and condensing itself into its own apparent mounds—how

shall we name it? The idea itself, which like a mighty billow at once overwhelms and bears aloft—what is it? Whence did it come? In vain would we derive it from the organs of sense: for these supply only surfaces, undulations, phantoms. In vain from the instruments of sensation: for these furnish only the chaos, the shapeless elements of sense. And least of all may we hope to find its origin, or sufficient cause, in the moulds and mechanism of the understanding, the whole purport and functions of which consist in individualization, in outlines and differencings by quantity and relation. It were wiser to seek substance in shadow, than absolute fulness in mere negation.

I have asked then for its birth-place in all that constitutes our relative individuality, in all that each man calls exclusively himself. It is an alien of which they know not: and for them the question itself is purposeless, and the very words that convey it are as sounds in an unknown language, or as the vision of heaven and earth expanded by the rising sun, which falls but as warmth on the eye-lids of the blind. To no class of *phænomena* or particulars can it be referred, itself being none; therefore, to no faculty by which these alone are apprehended. As little dare we refer it to any form of abstraction or generalization; for it has neither co-ordinate nor *analogon*; it is absolutely one; and that it is, and affirms itself to be, is its only predicate. And yet this power, nevertheless,

is ; — in supremacy of being it is ; * — and he for whom it manifests itself in its adequate idea, dare as little arrogate it to himself as his own, can as little appropriate it either totally or by partition, as he can claim ownership in the breathing air, or make an inclosure in the cope of heaven. † He bears witness of it to his own mind, even as he describes life and light : and, with the silence of light, it describes itself and dwells in us only as far as we dwell in it. The truths which it manifests are such as it alone can manifest, and in all truth it manifests itself. By what name then canst thou call a truth so manifested ? Is it not revelation ? Ask thyself whether thou canst attach to that lat-

* To affirm that reason is, is the same as to affirm that reason is being, or that the true being is reason, 'Ο Λόγος.— Hence, the reason or law of a thing constitutes its actual being, the ground of its reality.—1829.

† And yet this same is, is the essential predicate of the correspondent object of this power. What must we infer ? Even this ;—that the object and subject are one ;—that the reason is being ;—the supreme reason the supreme Being ; and that the antithesis of truth and being is but the result of the polarizing property of all finite mind, for which unity is manifested only by correspondent opposites. Here do we stop ? Woe to us, if we do ! Better that we had never begun. A deeper yet must be sought for,—even the absolute Will, the Good, the supereessential source of being, and in the eternal act of self-affirmation, the I Am, the Father—who with the only-begotten *Logos* (word, idea, supreme mind, *pleroma*, the word containing every word that proceedeth from the mouth of the Most High) and with the Spirit proceeding, is the one only God from everlasting to everlasting.—1829.

ter word any consistent meaning not included in the idea of the former. And the manifesting power, the source and the correlative of the idea thus manifested — is it not God? Either thou knowest it to be God, or thou hast called an idol by that awful name. Therefore in the most appropriate, no less than in the highest, sense of the word were the earliest teachers of humanity inspired. They alone were the true seers of God, and therefore prophets of the human race.

Look round you, and you behold everywhere an adaptation of means to ends. Meditate on the nature of a being whose ideas are creative, and consequently more real, more substantial than the things that, at the height of their creaturely state, are but their dim reflexes; * and the intuitive conviction will arise that in such a being there could exist no motive to the creation of a machine for its

If I may not rather resemble them to the resurgent ashes, with which (according to the tales of the later alchemists) the substantial forms of bird and flower made themselves visible as,

τὰ κακῆς ὕλης βλασθήματα χρυσὰ καὶ ἰσθλά.

And let me be permitted to add, in especial reference to this passage, a premonition quoted from the same work (*Zoroastrian Oracula Magica*),

Ἄ Νοῦς λέγει, τῷ νοοῦντι δὲ πᾶ λέγει.

Of the flower apparitions so solemnly affirmed by Sir K. Digby, Kercher, Helmont, and others, see a full and most interesting account in Southey's *Omniana*, (vol. ii. p. 82. *Spectral Flowers*. — *Ed.*) with a probable solution of this chemical marvel.

own sake; that, therefore, the material world must have been made for the sake of man, at once the highpriest and representative of the Creator, as far as he partakes of that reason in which the essences of all things co-exist in all their distinctions yet as one and indivisible. But I speak of man in his idea, and as subsumed in the divine humanity, in whom alone God loved the world.

In all inferior things from the grass on the house top to the giant tree of the forest; from the gnats that swarm in its shade, and the mole that burrows amid its roots to the eagle which builds in its summit, and the elephant which browses on its branches, we behold—first, a subjection to universal laws by which each thing belongs to the whole, as interpenetrated by the powers of the whole; and, secondly, the intervention of particular laws . . . by which the universal laws are suspended or tempered for the weal and sustenance of each particular class. Hence and thus we see too, that each species, and each individual of every species, becomes a system, a world of its own. If then we behold this economy every-where in the irrational creation, shall we not hold it probable that by some analagous intervention a similar temperament will have been effected for the rational and moral? Are we not entitled to expect some appropriate agency in behalf of the presiding and alone progressive creature? To presume some especial provision for the permanent interest of the creature destined to move and grow towards that divine humanity which

we have learnt to contemplate as the final cause of all creation, and the centre in which all its lines converge?

To discover the mode of intervention requisite for man's development and progression, we must seek then for some general law, by the untempered and uncounteracted action of which man's development and progression would be prevented and endangered. But this we shall find in that law of his understanding and fancy, by which he is impelled to abstract the changes and outward relations of matter and to arrange them under the form of causes and effects. And this was necessary, as the condition under which alone experience and intellectual growth are possible. But, on the other hand, by the same law he is inevitably tempted to misinterpret a constant precedence into positive causation, and thus to break and scatter the one divine and invisible life of nature into countless idols of the sense; and falling prostrate before lifeless images, the creatures of his own abstraction, is himself sensualized, and becomes a slave to the things of which he was formed to be the conqueror and sovereign. From the fetish of the imbruted African to the soul-debasing errors of the proud fact-hunting materialist we may trace the various ceremonials of the same idolatry, and shall find selfishness, hate, and servitude as the results. If therefore by the over-ruling and suspension of the phantom-cause of this superstition; if by separating effects from their natural antecedents; if by pre-

senting the *phænomena* of time (as far as is possible) in the absolute forms of eternity ; the nursling of experience should, in the early period of his pupilage, be compelled by a more impressive experience to seek in the invisible life alone for the true cause and invisible *nexus* of the things that are seen, we shall not demand the evidences of ordinary experience for that which, if it ever existed, existed as its antithesis and for its counteraction. Was it an appropriate mean to a necessary end ? Has it been attested by lovers of truth ; has it been believed by lovers of wisdom ? Do we see throughout all nature the occasional intervention of particular agencies in counter-check of universal laws ? (And of what other definition is a miracle susceptible ?) These are the questions : and if to these our answer must be affirmative, then we too will acquiesce in the traditions of humanity, and yielding as to a high interest of our own being, will discipline ourselves to the reverential and kindly faith, that the guides and teachers of mankind were the hands of power, no less than the voices of inspiration : and little anxious concerning the particular forms, proofs, and circumstances of each manifestation we will give an historic credence to the historic fact, that men sent by God have come with signs and wonders on the earth.

If it be objected, that in nature, as distinguished from man, this intervention of particular laws is, or with the increase of science will be, resolvable into the universal laws which they had appeared

to counterbalance, we will reply : Even so it may be in the case of miracles ; but wisdom forbids her children to antedate their knowledge, or to act and feel otherwise or further than they know. But should that time arrive, the sole difference, that could result from such an enlargement of our view, would be this ; — that what we now consider as miracles in opposition to ordinary experience, we should then reverence with a yet higher devotion as harmonious parts of one great complex miracle, when the antithesis between experience and belief would itself be taken up into the unity of intuitive reason.

And what purpose of philosophy can this acquiescence answer ? A gracious purpose, a most valuable end ; if it prevent the energies of philosophy from being idly wasted, by removing the contrariety without confounding the distinction between philosophy and faith. The philosopher will remain a man in sympathy with his fellow men. The head will not be disjoined from the heart, nor will speculative truth be alienated from practical wisdom. And vainly without the union of both shall we expect an opening of the inward eye to the glorious vision of that existence which admits of no question out of itself, acknowledges no predicate but the I AM IN THAT I AM ! Θαυμάζοντες φιλοσοφούμεν· φιλοσοφήσαντες θαμβούμεν. In wonder (τῷ θαυμάζειν) says Aristotle, does philosophy begin : and in astoundment (τῷ θαμβεῖν) says Plato, does all true philosophy finish. As every faculty, with

every the minutest organ of our nature, owes its whole reality and comprehensibility to an existence incomprehensible and groundless, because the ground of all comprehension; not without the union of all that is essential in all the functions of our spirit, not without an emotion tranquil from its very intensity, shall we worthily contemplate in the magnitude and integrity of the world that life-buUient stream which breaks through every momentary embankment, again, indeed, and evermore to embank itself, but within no banks to stagnate or be imprisoned.

But here it behoves us to bear in mind, that all true reality has both its ground and its evidence in the will, without which as its complement science itself is but an elaborate game of shadows, begins in abstractions and ends in perplexity. For considered merely intellectually, individuality, as individuality, is only conceivable as with and in the universal and infinite, neither before nor after it. No transition is possible from one to the other, as from the architect to the house, or the watch to its maker. The finite form can neither be laid hold of by, nor can it appear to, the mere speculative intellect as any thing of itself real, but merely as an apprehension, a frame-work which the human imagination forms by its own limits, as the foot measures itself on the snow; and the sole truth of which we must again refer to the divine imagination, in virtue of its omniformity. For even as thou art capable of beholding the transparent air as

little during the absence as during the presence of light, so canst thou behold the finite things as actually existing neither with nor without the substance. Not without,—for then the forms cease to be, and are lost in night : not with it,—for it is the light, the substance shining through it, which thou canst alone really see.

The ground-work, therefore, of all pure speculation is the full apprehension of the difference between the contemplation of reason, namely, that intuition of things which arises when we possess ourselves, as one with the whole, which is substantial knowledge, and that which presents itself when transferring reality to the negations of reality, to the ever varying frame-work of the uniform life, we think of ourselves as separated beings, and place nature in antithesis to the mind, as object to subject, thing to thought, death to life. This is abstract knowledge, or the science of the mere understanding. By the former, we know that existence is its own predicate, self-affirmation, the one attribute in which all others are contained, not as parts, but as manifestations. It is an eternal and infinite self-rejoicing, self-loving, with a joy unfathomable, with a love all comprehensive. It is absolute ; and the absolute is neither singly that which affirms, nor that which is affirmed ; but the identity and living *copula* of both.

On the other hand, by the abstract knowledge which belongs to us as finite beings, and which leads to a science of delusion then only, when it

would exist for itself instead of being the instrument of the former—(even as the former is equally hollow and yet more perilously delusive, where it is not radicated in a deeper ground) when it would itself, I say, be its own life and verity, instead of being, as it were, a translation of the living word into a dead language, for the purposes of memory, arrangement, and general communication,—it is by this abstract knowledge that the understanding distinguishes the affirmed from the affirming. Well if it distinguish without dividing ! Well if by distinction it add clearness to fulness, and prepare for the intellectual re-union of the all in one in that eternal Reason whose fulness hath no opacity, whose transparency hath no *vacuum*.

If we thoughtfully review the three preceding paragraphs, we shall find the conclusion to be ;—that the dialectic intellect by the exertion of its own powers exclusively can lead us to a general affirmation of the supreme reality, of an absolute being. But here it stops. It is utterly incapable of communicating insight or conviction concerning the existence or possibility of the world, as different from Deity. It finds itself constrained to identify, more truly to confound, the Creator with the aggregate of his creatures, and, cutting the knot which it cannot untwist, to deny altogether the reality of all finite existence, and then to shelter itself from its own dissatisfaction, its own importunate queries, in the wretched evasion that of nothings, no solution can be required : till pain haply,

and anguish, and remorse, with bitter scoff and moody laughter inquire ;—Are we then indeed nothings ?—till through every organ of sense nature herself asks ;—How and whence did this sterile and pertinacious nothing acquire its plural number ?—*Unde quæso, hæc nihili in nihila tam portentosa transnihilatio?*—and lastly ;—What is that inward mirror, in for which these nothings have at least relative existence ? The inevitable result of all consequent reasoning, in which the intellect refuses to acknowledge a higher or deeper ground than it can itself supply, and weens to possess within itself the centre of its own system, is — and from Zeno the Eleatic to Spinoza, and from Spinoza to the Schellings, Okens and their adherents, of the present day, ever has been — pantheism under one or other of its modes, the least repulsive of which differs from the rest, not in its consequences, which are one and the same in all, and in all alike are practically atheistic, but only as it may express the striving of the philosopher himself to hide these consequences from his own mind. This, therefore, I repeat, is the final conclusion. All speculative disquisition must begin with postulates, which the conscience alone can at once authorize and substantiate : and from whichever point the reason may start, from the things which are seen to the one invisible, or from the idea of the absolute one to the things that are seen, it will find a chasm, which the moral being only, which the spirit and religion of man alone, can fill up.

Thus I prefaced my inquiry into the science of method with a principle deeper than science, more certain than demonstration. For that the very ground, faith Aristotle, is groundless or self-grounded, is an identical proposition. From the indemonstrable flows the sap that circulates through every branch and spray of the demonstration. To this principle I referred the choice of the final object, the control over time, or, to comprise all in one, the method of the will. From this I started, or rather seemed to start; for it still moved before me, as an invisible guardian and guide, and it is this the re-appearance of which announces the conclusion of the circuit, and welcomes me at the goal. Yea (faith an enlightened physician), there is but one principle, which alone reconciles the man with himself, with others and with the world; which regulates all relations, tempers all passions, gives power to overcome or support all suffering, and which is not to be shaken by aught earthly, for it belongs not to the earth; namely, the principle of religion, the living and substantial faith *which passeth all understanding*, as the cloud-piercing rock, which overhangs the stronghold of which it had been the quarry and remains the foundation. This elevation of the spirit above the semblances of custom and the senses to a world of spirit, this life in the idea, even in the supreme and godlike, which alone merits the name of life, and without which our organic life is but a state of somnambulism; this it is which affords the sole sure anchorage in the

form, and at the same time the substantiating principle of all true wisdom, the satisfactory solution of all the contradictions of human nature, of the whole riddle of the world. This alone belongs to and speaks intelligibly to all alike, the learned and the ignorant, if but the heart listens. For alike present in all, it may be awakened, but it cannot be given. But let it not be supposed, that it is a sort of knowledge : no ! it is a form of BEING, or indeed it is the only knowledge that truly *is*, and all other science is real only as far as it is symbolical of this. The material universe, saith a Greek philosopher, is but one vast complex *mythus*, that is, symbolical representation, and mythology the *apex* and complement of all genuine physiology. But as this principle cannot be implanted by the discipline of logic, so neither can it be excited or evolved by the arts of rhetoric. For it is an immutable truth, that what comes from the heart, that alone goes to the heart : what proceeds from a divine impulse, that the godlike alone can awaken.



THE THIRD LANDING-PLACE :

Or Essays Miscellaneous.

*Etiam a Musis si quando animum paulisper abducamus,
apud Musas nihilominus feriamur : at reclines quidem, at
otiosas, at de his et illis inter se libere colloquentes.*



ESSAY I.

Fortuna plerumque est veluti galaxia quarundam obscurarum virtutum sine nomine.
BACON.

Fortune is for the most part but a galaxy or milky way, as it were, of certain obscure virtues without a name.

DOES fortune favour fools? Or how do you explain the origin of the proverb, which, differently worded, is to be found in all the languages of Europe?"

„ This proverb admits of various explanations according to the mood of mind in which it is used. It may arise from pity, and the soothing persuasion that Providence is eminently watchful over the helpless, and extends an especial care to those who are not capable of caring for themselves. So used, it breathes the same feeling as ‘ God tempers the wind to the shorn lamb’—or the more sportive adage, that ‘ the fairies take care of children and tipsy folk.’ The persuasion itself, in addition to the general religious feeling of mankind, and the scarcely less general love of the marvellous, may be accounted for from our tendency to exaggerate all effects that seem disproportionate to their visible

cause and all circumstances that are in any way strongly contrasted with our notions of the persons under them. Secondly, it arises from the safety and success which an ignorance of danger and difficulty sometimes actually assists in procuring; inasmuch as it precludes the despondence, which might have kept the more foresighted from undertaking the enterprise, the depression which would retard its progress, and those overwhelming influences of terror in cases where the vivid perception of the danger constitutes the greater part of the danger itself. Thus men are said to have swooned and even died at the sight of a narrow bridge, over which they had ridden the night before in perfect safety; or at tracing their footmarks along the edge of a precipice which the darkness had concealed from them. A more obscure cause, yet not wholly to be omitted, is afforded by the undoubted fact, that the exertion of the reasoning faculties tends to extinguish or bedim those mysterious instincts of skill, which, though for the most part latent, we nevertheless possess in common with other animals.

Or the proverb may be used invidiously: and folly in the vocabulary of envy or baseness may signify courage and magnanimity. Hardihood and fool-hardiness are indeed as different as green and yellow, yet will appear the same to the jaundiced eye. Courage multiplies the chances of success by sometimes making opportunities, and always availing itself of them: and in this sense fortune may be said to favour fools by those, who, however

prudent in their own opinion, are deficient in valour and enterprize. Again : an eminently good and wise man, for whom the praises of the judicious have procured a high reputation even with the world at large, proposes to himself certain objects, and adapting the right means to the right end attains them : but his objects not being what the world calls fortune, neither money nor artificial rank, his admitted inferiors in moral and intellectual worth, but more prosperous in their worldly concerns, are said to have been favoured by fortune, and he slighted : although the fools did the same in their line as the wise man in his : they adapted the appropriate means to the desired end and so succeeded. In this sense the proverb is current by a misuse, or a *catachresis* at least, of both the words, fortune and fools.

.. But, lastly, there is, doubtless, a true meaning attached to fortune, distinct both from prudence and from courage ; and distinct too from that absence of depressing or bewildering passions, which (according to my favourite proverb, ‘ extremes meet, ’) the fool not seldom obtains in as great perfection by his ignorance, as the wise man by the highest energies of thought and self-discipline. Luck has a real existence in human affairs from the infinite number of powers that are in action at the same time, and from the co-existence of things contingent and accidental (such as to us at least are accidental) with the regular appearances and general laws of nature. A familiar instance will make these words intelligible. The moon waxes

and wanes according to a necessary law. — The clouds likewise, and all the manifold appearances connected with them, are governed by certain laws no less than the phases of the moon. But the laws which determine the latter are known and calculable, while those of the former are hidden from us. At all events, the number and variety of their effects baffle our powers of calculation; and that the sky is clear or obscured at any particular time, we speak of, in common language, as a matter of accident. Well! at the time of the full moon, but when the sky is completely covered with black clouds, I am walking on in the dark, aware of no particular danger: a sudden gust of wind rends the cloud for a moment, and the moon emerging discloses to me a chasm or precipice, to the very brink of which I had advanced my foot. This is what is meant by luck, and according to the more or less serious mood or habit of our mind we exclaim, how lucky! or, how providential! The co-presence of numberless *phænomena*, which from the complexity or subtlety of their determining causes are called contingencies, and the co-existence of these with any regular or necessary *phænomenon* (as the clouds with the moon for instance) occasion coincidences, which, when they are attended by any advantage or injury, and are at the same time incapable of being calculated or foreseen by human prudence, form good or ill luck. On a hot sunshiny afternoon came on a sudden storm and spoilt the farmer's hay: and this is called ill luck. We will suppose the same event to take

place, when meteorology shall have been perfected into a science, provided with unerring instruments; but which the farmer had neglected to examine. This is no longer ill luck, but imprudence. Now apply this to our proverb. Unforeseen coincidences may have greatly helped a man, yet if they have done for him only what possibly from his own abilities he might have effected for himself, his good luck will excite less attention and the instance be less remembered. That clever men should attain their objects seems natural, and we neglect the circumstances that perhaps produced that success of themselves without the intervention of skill or foresight; but we dwell on the fact and remember it as something strange, when the same happens to a weak or ignorant man. So too, though the latter should fail in his undertakings from concurrences that might have happened to the wisest man, yet his failure being no more than might have been expected and accounted for from his folly, it lays no hold on our attention, but fleets away among the other distinguished waves in which the stream of ordinary life murmurs by us, and is forgotten. Had it been as true as it was notoriously false, that those all-embracing discoveries, which have shed a dawn of science on the art of chemistry, and give no obscure promise of some one great constitutive law, in the light of which dwell dominion and the power of prophecy; if these discoveries, instead of having been as they really were, preconcerted by meditation, and evolved out of his own intellect, had occurred by a set of lucky accidents to the il-

lustrious father and founder of philosophic alchemy ; if they had presented themselves to Davy exclusively in consequence of his luck in possessing a particular galvanic battery ; if this battery, as far as Davy was concerned, had itself been an accident, and not (as in point of fact it was) desired and obtained by him for the purpose of ensuring the testimony of experience to his principles, and in order to bind down material nature under the inquisition of reason, and force from her, as by torture, unequivocal answers to prepared and preconceived questions ; — yet still they would not have been talked of or described, as instances of luck, but as the natural results of his admitted genius and known skill. But should an accident have disclosed similar discoveries to a mechanic at Birmingham or Sheffield, and if the man should grow rich in consequence, and partly by the envy of his neighbours, and partly with good reason, be considered by them as a man below *par* in the general powers of his understanding ; then, “ O what a lucky fellow ! — Well, Fortune does favour fools — that’s certain ! — It is always so ! ” — And forthwith the exclaimer relates half a dozen similar instances. Thus accumulating the one sort of facts and never collecting the other, we do, as poets in their diction, and quacks of all denominations do in their reasoning, put a part for the whole, and at once soothe our envy and gratify our love of the marvellous, by the sweeping proverb, ‘ Fortune favours fools.’



ESSAY II.

*Quod me non movet aestimatio:
Verum est munusculum mei sodalis.*

CATULLUS.*

It interests me not by any conceit of its value ; but it is a remembrance of my honoured friend.

THE philosophic ruler, who secured the favours of fortune by seeking wisdom and knowledge in preference to them, has pathetically observed—The heart knoweth its own bitterness ; and there is a joy in which the stranger intermeddleth not. A simple question founded on a trite proverb, with a discursive answer to it, would scarcely suggest to an indifferent person any other notion than that of a mind at ease, amusing itself with its own activity. Once before (I believe about this time last year) I had taken up the old memorandum book, from which I transcribed the preceding essay, and it had then attracted my notice by the name of the illustrious chemist mentioned in the last illustration. Exasperated by the base and cowardly attempt, which had been made to detract from the honours

due to his astonishing genius, I had slightly altered the concluding sentences, substituting the more recent for his earlier discoveries; and without the most distant intention of publishing what I then wrote, I had expressed my own convictions for the gratification of my own feelings, and finished by tranquilly paraphrasing into a chemical allegory the Homeric adventure of Menelaus with Proteus. Oh! with what different feelings, with what a sharp and sudden emotion did I re-peruse the same question yester-morning, having by accident opened the book at the page, upon which it was written. I was moved: for it was Admiral Sir Alexander Ball, who first proposed the question to me, and the particular satisfaction, which he expressed, had occasioned me to note down the substance of my reply. I was moved: because to this conversation I was indebted for the friendship and confidence with which he afterwards honoured me; and because it recalled the memory of one of the most delightful mornings I ever passed; when, as we were riding together, the same person related to me the principal events of his own life, and introduced them by adverting to this conversation. It recalled too the deep impression left on my mind by that narrative, the impression, that I had never known any analogous instance, in which a man so successful had been so little indebted to fortune, or lucky accidents, or so exclusively both the architect and builder of his own success. The sum of his history may be comprised in this one sentence:

Hæc, sub numine nobismet fecimus, sapientia duce, fortuna permittente. (These things, under God, we have done for ourselves, through the guidance of wisdom, and with the permission of fortune.) Luck gave him nothing: in her most generous moods, she only worked with him as with a friend, not for him as for a fondling; but more often she simply stood neuter and suffered him to work for himself. Ah! how could I be otherwise than affected by whatever reminded me of that daily and familiar intercourse with him, which made the fifteen months from May 1804, to October 1805, in many respects, the most memorable and instructive period of my life?—Ah! how could I be otherwise than most deeply affected, when there was still lying on my table the paper which, the day before, had conveyed to me the unexpected and most awful tidings of this man's death, — his death in the fulness of all his powers, in the rich autumn of ripe yet undecaying manhood? I once knew a lady, who after the loss of a lovely child continued for several days in a state of seeming indifference, the weather, at the same time, as if in unison with her, being calm, though gloomy; till one morning a burst of sunshine breaking in upon her, and suddenly lighting up the room where she was sitting, she dissolved at once into tears, and wept passionately. In no very dissimilar manner did the sudden gleam of recollection at the sight of this memorandum act on myself. I had been stunned by the intelligence, as by an outward blow, till this trifling

incident startled and disentranced me ; the sudden pang shivered through my whole frame ; and if I repressed the outward shows of sorrow, it was by force that I repressed them, and because it is not by tears that I ought to mourn for the loss of Sir Alexander Ball.

He was a man above his age : but for that very reason the age has the more need to have the master-features of his character portrayed and preserved. This I feel it my duty to attempt, and this alone : for having received neither instructions nor permission from the family of the deceased, I cannot think myself allowed to enter into the particulars of his private history, strikingly as many of them would illustrate the elements and composition of his mind. For he was indeed a living confutation of the assertion attributed to the Prince of Condé, that no man appeared great to his *valet de chambre*—a saying which, I suspect, owes its currency less to its truth, than to the envy of mankind and the misapplication of the word, great, to actions unconnected with reason and free will. It will be sufficient for my purpose to observe that the purity and strict propriety of his conduct, which precluded rather than silenced calumny, the evenness of his temper and his attentive and affectionate manners, in private life, greatly aided and increased his public utility : and, if it should please Providence, that a portion of his spirit should descend with his mantle, the virtues of Sir Alexander Ball, as a master, a husband, and a parent, will form a no less remark-

able epoch in the moral history of the Maltese than his wisdom, as a governor, has made in that of their outward circumstances. That the private and personal qualities of a first magistrate should have political effects, will appear strange to no reflecting Englishman, who has attended to the workings of men's minds during the first ferment of revolutionary principles, and must therefore have witnessed the influence of our own sovereign's domestic character in counteracting them. But in Malta there were circumstances which rendered such an example peculiarly requisite and beneficent. The very existence, for so many generations, of an order of lay celibates in that island, who abandoned even the outward shows of an adherence to their vow of chastity, must have had pernicious effects on the morals of the inhabitants. But when it is considered too that the knights of Malta had been for the last fifty years or more a set of useless idlers, generally illiterate,*—for they thought literature no part of a soldier's excellence; and yet effeminate,—for they were soldiers in name only: when it is considered, that they were, moreover, all of them

* The personal effects of every knight were, after his death, appropriated to the Order, and his books, if he had any, devolved to the public library. This library therefore, which has been accumulating from the time of their first settlement in the island, is a fair criterion of the nature and degree of their literary studies, as an average. Even in respect to works of military science, it is contemptible—as the sole public library of so numerous and opulent an order, most contemptible—and in all other departments of literature it is below contempt.

aliens, who looked upon themselves not merely as of a superior rank to the native nobles, but as beings of a different race (I had almost said, species), from the Maltese collectively ; and finally that these men possessed exclusively the government of the island ; it may be safely concluded that they were little better than a perpetual influenza, relaxing and diseasing the hearts of all the families within their sphere of influence. Hence the peasantry, who fortunately were below their reach, notwithstanding the more than childish ignorance in which they were kept by their priests, yet compared with the middle and higher classes, were both in mind and body as ordinary men compared with dwarfs. Every respectable family had some one knight for their patron, as a matter of course ; and to him the honour of a sister or a daughter was sacrificed, equally as a matter of course.* But why should I thus disguise the truth ? Alas ! in nine instances out of ten, this patron was the common paramour of every woman in the family. Were I composing a state-memorial, I should abstain from all allusion to moral good or evil, as not having now first to learn, that with diplomatists and with practical statesmen of every denomination, it would preclude all attention to its other contents, and have no result but that of securing for its author's name the official private mark of exclusion or dismissal, as a weak or suspicious person. But among those for whom I am now writing, there are, I trust, many who will think

* See Table Talk, p. 295, 2nd edit.—*Ed.*

it not the feebleſt reaſon for rejoicing in our poſſeſſion of Malta, and not the leaſt worthy motive for wiſhing its retention, that one ſource of human miſery and corruption has been dried up. Such perſons will hear the name of Sir Alexander Ball with additional reverence, as of one who has made the protection of Great Britain a double bleſſing to the Malteſe, and broken *the bonds of iniquity*, as well as unlocked the fetters of political oppreſſion.

When we are praizing the departed by our own fire-fides, we dwell moſt fondly on thoſe qualities which had won our perſonal affection, and which ſharpen our individual regrets. But when impelled by a loftier and more meditative ſorrow, we would raiſe a public monument to their memory, we praize them appropriately when we relate their actions faithfully; and thus preſerving their example for the imitation of the living, alleviate the loſs, while we demonſtrate its magnitude. My funeral eulogy of Sir Alexander Ball muſt therefore be a narrative of his life; and this friend of mankind will be defrauded of honour in proportion as that narrative is deficient and fragmentary. It ſhall, however, be as complete as my information enables, and as prudence and a proper reſpect for the feelings of the living permit, me to render it. His fame (I adopt the words of our elder writers) is ſo great throughout the world that he ſtands in no need of an encomium: and yet his worth is much greater than his fame. It is impoſſible not to ſpeak great things of him, and yet it will be very difficult to ſpeak what he deſerves. But cuſtom requires that ſomething

should be said : it is a duty and a debt which we owe to ourselves and to mankind, not less than to his memory : and I hope his great soul, if it hath any knowledge of what is done here below, will not be offended at the smallness even of my offering.

Ah ! how little, when among the subjects of the Friend I promised ‘characters met with in real life,’ did I anticipate the sad event, which compels me to weave on a cypress branch those sprays of laurel which I had destined for his bust, not his monument ! He lived as we should all live ; and, I doubt not, left the world as we should all wish to leave it. Such is the power of dispensing blessings, which Providence has attached to the truly great and good, that they cannot even die without advantage to their fellow-creatures : for death consecrates their example ; and the wisdom, which might have been slighted at the council-table, becomes oracular from the shrine. Those rare excellencies, which make our grief poignant, make it likewise profitable ; and the tears, which wise men shed for the departure of the wise, are among those that are preserved in heaven. It is the fervent aspiration of my spirit, that I may so perform the task which private gratitude, and public duty impose on me, that, “as God hath cut this tree of paradise down from its seat of earth, the dead trunk may yet support a part of the declining temple, or at least serve to kindle the fire on the altar.”*

* Jer. Taylor.



ESSAY III.

*Si partem tacuisse velim, quodcumque relinquam,
Majus erit. Veteres actus, primamque juventam
Prosequar? Ad sese mentem præsentia ducunt.
Narrem justitiam? Resplendet gloria Martis.
Armati referam vires? Plus egit inermis.*

CLAUDIAN.*

If I desire to pass over a part in silence, whatever I omit, will seem the most worthy to have been recorded. Shall I pursue his old exploits and early youth? His recent merits recall the mind to themselves. Shall I dwell on his justice? The glory of the warrior rises before me resplendent. Shall I relate his strength in arms? He performed yet greater things unarmed.

“**H**ERE is something,” says Harrington,† “first in the making of a commonwealth, then in the governing of it, and last of all in the leading of its armies, which, though there be great divines, great lawyers, great men in all ranks of life, seems to be peculiar only to the genius of a gentleman. For so it is in the universal series of story, that if any man has founded a commonwealth, he was

* De Laud. Stilic. I. 13.—*Ed.*

† Preliminaries to Oceana, P. I.—*Ed.*

first a gentleman." Such also, he adds, as have got any fame as civil governors, have been gentlemen, or persons of known descents. Sir Alexander Ball was a gentleman by birth ; a younger brother of an old and respectable family in Gloucestershire. He went into the navy at an early age from his choice, and as he himself told me, in consequence of the deep impresson and vivid images left on his mind by the perusal of Robinson Crusoe. It is not my intention to detail the steps of his promotion, or the services in which he was engaged as a subaltern. I recollect many particulars indeed, but not the dates, with such distinctness as would enable me to state them (as it would be necessary to do if I stated them at all) in the order of time. These dates might perhaps have been procured from other sources : but incidents that are neither characteristic nor instructive, even such as would be expected with reason in a regular life, are no part of my plan ; while those which are both interesting and illustrative I have been precluded from mentioning, some from motives which have been already explained, and others from still higher considerations. The most important of these may be deduced from a reflection with which he himself once concluded a long and affecting narration ; namely, that no body of men can for any length of time be safely treated otherwise than as rational beings ; and that, therefore, the education of the lower classes was of the utmost consequence to the permanent security of the empire, even for

the sake of our navy. The dangers, apprehended from the education of the lower classes, arose (he said) entirely from its not being universal, and from the unusualness in the lowest classes of those accomplishments, which he, like Dr. Bell, regarded as one of the means of education, and not as education itself.* If, he observed, the lower classes in general possessed but one eye or one arm, the few who were so fortunate as to possess two would naturally become vain and restless, and consider themselves as entitled to a higher situation. He illustrated this by the faults attributed to learned women, and that the same objections were formerly made to educating women at all; namely, that their knowledge made them vain, affected, and neglectful of their proper duties. Now that all women of condition are well-educated, we hear no more of these apprehensions, or observe any instances to justify them. Yet if a lady understood the Greek one-tenth part as well as the whole circle of her acquaintances understood the French language, it would not surprise us to find her less pleasing from the consciousness of her superiority in the possession of an unusual advantage. Sir Alexander Ball quoted the speech of an old admi-

* Which consists in educating, or to adopt Dr. Bell's own expression, eliciting the faculties of the human mind, and at the same time subordinating them to the reason and conscience; varying the means of this common end according to the sphere and particular mode, in which the individual is likely to act and become useful.

ral, one of whose two great wishes was to have a ship's crew composed altogether of serious Scotchmen. He spoke with great reprobation of the vulgar notion, the worse man, the better sailor. Courage, he said, was the natural product of familiarity with danger, which thoughtlessness would oftentimes turn into fool-hardiness; and that he had always found the most usefully brave sailors the gravest and most rational of his crew. The best sailor, he had ever had, first attracted his notice by the anxiety which he expressed concerning the means of remitting some money which he had received in the West Indies to his sister in England; and this man, without any tinge of methodism, was never heard to swear an oath, and was remarkable for the firmness with which he devoted a part of every Sunday to the reading of his Bible. I record this with satisfaction as a testimony of great weight, and in all respects unexceptionable; for Sir Alexander Ball's opinions throughout life remained unwarped by zealotry, and were those of a mind seeking after truth in calmness and complete self-possession. He was much pleased with an unsuspicious testimony furnished by Dampier. "I have particularly observed," writes this famous old navigator,* "there and in other places, that such as had been well-bred, were generally most careful to improve their time, and would be very industrious and frugal where there was any probability of con-

* Vol. II. P. ii. p. 89.—*Ed.*

fiderable gain ; but on the contrary, such as had been bred up in ignorance and hard labour, when they came to have plenty would extravagantly squander away their time and money in drinking and making a bluffer." Indeed it is a melancholy proof, how strangely power warps the minds of ordinary men, that there can be a doubt on this subject among persons who have been themselves educated. It tempts a suspicion, that unknown to themselves they find a comfort in the thought that their inferiors are something less than men ; or that they have an uneasy half-consciousness that, if this were not the case, they would themselves have no claim to be their superiors. For a sober education naturally inspires self-respect. But he who respects himself will respect others ; and he who respects both himself and others, must of necessity be a brave man. The great importance of this subject, and the increasing interest which good men of all denominations feel in the bringing about of a national education, must be my excuse for having entered so minutely into Sir Alexander Ball's opinions on this head, in which, however, I am the more excusable, being now on that part of his life which I am obliged to leave almost a blank.

During his lieutenancy, and after he had perfected himself in the knowledge and duties of a practical sailor, he was compelled by the state of his health to remain in England for a considerable length of time. Of this he industriously availed

himself for the acquirement of substantial knowledge from books; and during his whole life afterwards, he considered those as his happiest hours, which, without any neglect of official or professional duty, he could devote to reading. He preferred, indeed he almost confined himself to, history, political economy, voyages and travels, natural history, and latterly agricultural works: in short, to such books as contain specific facts, or practical principles capable of specific application. His active life, and the particular objects of immediate utility, some one of which he had always in his view, precluded a taste for works of pure speculation and abstract science, though he highly honoured those who were eminent in these respects, and considered them as the benefactors of mankind, no less than those who afterwards discovered the mode of applying their principles, or who realized them in practice. Works of amusement, as novels, plays, and the like did not appear even to amuse him; and the only poetical composition, of which I have ever heard him speak, was a manuscript* poem written by one of my friends, which I read to his lady in his presence. To my surprise he afterwards spoke of this with warm interest; but it was evident to me, that it was not so much the poetic merit of the composition that had inter-

* Though it remains, I believe, unpublished, I cannot resist the temptation of recording that it was Mr. Wordsworth's Peter Bell. 1817.

ected him, as the truth and psychological insight with which it represented the practicability of reforming the most hardened minds, and the various accidents which may awaken the most brutalized person to a recognition of his nobler being. I will add one remark of his own knowledge acquired from books, which appears to me both just and valuable. The prejudice against such knowledge, he said, and the custom of opposing it to that which is learnt by practice, originated in those times when books were almost confined to theology and to logical and metaphysical subtleties; but that at present there is scarcely any practical knowledge, which is not to be found in books: the press is the means by which intelligent men now converse with each other, and persons of all classes and all pursuits convey, each the contribution of his individual experience. It was therefore, he said, as absurd to hold book-knowledge at present in contempt, as it would be for a man to avail himself only of his own eyes and ears, and to aim at nothing which could not be performed exclusively by his own arms. The use and necessity of personal experience consisted in the power of choosing and applying what had been read, and of discriminating by the light of analogy the practicable from the impracticable, and probability from mere plausibility. Without a judgment matured and steadied by actual experience, a man would read to little or perhaps to bad purpose; but yet that experience, which in exclusion of all other know-

ledge has been derived from one man's life, is in the present day scarcely worthy of the name—at least for those who are to act in the higher and wider spheres of duty. An ignorant general, he said, inspired him with terror; for if he were too proud to take advice he would ruin himself by his own blunders; and if he were not, by adopting the worst that was offered. A great genius may indeed form an exception; but we do not lay down rules in expectation of wonders. A similar remark I remember to have heard from an officer, who to eminence in professional science and the gallantry or a tried soldier adds all the accomplishments of a sound scholar and the powers of a man of genius.

One incident, which happened at this period of Sir Alexander's life, is so illustrative of his character, and furnishes so strong a presumption that the thoughtful humanity by which he was distinguished was not wholly the growth of his latter years, that, though it may appear to some trifling in itself, I will insert it in this place, with the occasion on which it was communicated to me. In a large party at the Grand Master's palace, I had observed a naval officer of distinguished merit listening to Sir Alexander Ball, whenever he joined in the conversation, with so marked a pleasure, that it seemed as if his very voice, independently of what he said, had been delightful to him: and once as he fixed his eyes on Sir Alexander Ball, I could not but notice the mixed expression of awe and af-

fection, which gave a more than common interest to so manly a countenance. During his stay in the island, this officer honoured me not unfrequently with his visits; and at the conclusion of my last conversation with him, in which I had dwelt on the wisdom of the Governor's* conduct in a recent and difficult emergency, he told me that he considered himself as indebted to the same excellent person for that which was dearer to him than his life. "Sir Alexander Ball," said he, "has (I dare say) forgotten the circumstance; but when he was Lieutenant Ball, he was the officer whom I accompanied in my first boat-expedition, being then a midshipman and only in my fourteenth year. As we were rowing up to the vessel which we were to attack, amid a discharge of musquetry, I was overpowered by fear, my knees trembled under me, and I seemed on the point of fainting away. Lieutenant Ball, who saw the condition I was in, placed himself close beside me, and still

* Such Sir Alexander Ball was in reality, and such was his general appellation in the Mediterranean: I adopt this title therefore, to avoid the ungraceful repetition of his own name on the one hand, and on the other the confusion which might arise from the use of his real title, namely, "His Majesty's civil Commissioner for the island of Malta and its Dependencies; and Minister Plenipotentiary to the Order of St. John." This is not the place to expose the timid and unsteady policy which continued the latter title, or the petty jealousies which interfered to prevent Sir Alexander Ball from having the title of Governor, from one of the very causes which rendered him fittest for the office.

(See *Table Talk*, p. 295, 2nd edit.—*Ed.*)

keeping his countenance directed toward the enemy, took hold of my hand, and pressing it in the most friendly manner, said in a low voice, ‘ Courage, my dear boy! don’t be afraid of yourself! you will recover in a minute or so—I was just the same, when I first went out in this way.’ Sir,” added the officer to me, “ it was as if an angel had put a new soul into me. With the feeling, that I was not yet dishonoured, the whole burthen of agony was removed; and from that moment I was as fearless and forward as the oldest of the boat’s crew, and on our return the lieutenant spoke highly of me to our captain. I am scarcely less convinced of my own being, than that I should have been what I tremble to think of, if, instead of his humane encouragement, he had at that moment scoffed, threatened, or reviled me. And this was the more kind in him, because, as I afterwards understood, his own conduct in his first trial had evinced to all appearances the greatest fearlessness, and that he said this therefore only to give me heart, and restore me to my own good opinion.” This anecdote, I trust, will have some weight with those who may have lent an ear to any of those vague calumnies from which no naval commander can secure his good name, who knowing the paramount necessity of regularity and strict discipline in a ship of war, adopts an appropriate plan for the attainment of these objects, and remains constant and immutable in the execution. To an Athenian, who, in praising a public functionary had

said that every one either applauded him or left him without censure, a philosopher replied — “ How seldom then must he have done his duty ! ”

Of Sir Alexander Ball’s character, as Captain Ball, of his measures as a disciplinarian, and of the wife and dignified principle on which he grounded those measures, I have already spoken in a former part of this work,* and must content myself therefore with entreating the reader to re-peruse that passage as belonging to this place, and as a part of the present narration. Ah ! little did I expect at the time I wrote that account, that the motives of delicacy, which then impelled me to withhold the name, would so soon be exchanged for the higher duty which now justifies me in adding it ! At the thought of such events the language of a tender superstition is the voice of nature itself, and those facts alone presenting themselves to our memory which had left an impression on our hearts, we assent to and adopt the poet’s pathetic complaint :

O, Sir ! the good die first,
And those whose hearts are dry as summer dust,
Burn to the socket.†—————

Thus that the humane plan described in the pages now referred to, a system in pursuance of which the captain of a man of war uniformly regarded his sentences not as dependent on his own will, or to be affected by the state of his feelings

* Vol. I. f. 1. Essay 2.—*Ed.*

† Excursion, B. I.—*Ed.*

at the moment, but as the pre-established determinations of known laws, and himself as the voice of the law in pronouncing the sentence, and its delegate in enforcing the execution, could not but furnish occasional food to the spirit of detraction, must be evident to every reflecting mind. It is indeed little less than impossible, that he, who in order to be effectively humane determines to be inflexibly just, and who is inexorable to his own feelings when they would interrupt the course of justice; who looks at each particular act by the light of all its consequences, and as the representative of ultimate good or evil, should not sometimes be charged with tyranny by weak minds. And it is too certain that the calumny will be willingly believed and eagerly propagated by all those, who would shun the presence of an eye keen in the detection of imposture, incapacity, and misconduct, and of a resolution as steady in their exposure. We soon hate the man whose qualities we dread, and thus have a double interest, an interest of passion as well as of policy, in decrying and defaming him. But good men will rest satisfied with the promise made to them by the divine Comforter, that by her children shall wisdom be justified.



ESSAY IV.

· the generous spirit, who, when brought
 Among the talks of real life, hath wrought
 Upon the plan that pleas'd his childish thought ;
 Whose high endeavours are an inward light
 That make the path before him always bright ;
 Who doom'd to go in company with pain,
 And fear and bloodshed, miserable train !
 Turns his necessity to glorious gain ;
 By objects, which might force the soul to abate
 Her feeling, render'd more compassionate.

WORDSWORTH.*

AT the close of the American war, Captain Ball was entrusted with the protection and conveying of an immense mercantile fleet to America, and by his great prudence and unexampled attention to the interests of all and each, he endeared his name to the American merchants, and laid the foundation of that high respect and predilection which both the Americans and their government ever afterwards entertained for him. My recollection does not enable me to attempt any accuracy in the date or circumstances, or to add the particulars, of his services in the West Indies and on the coast of America. I now therefore merely allude to the fact with a prospective reference to opinions and

* The Christian Warrior.—*Ed.*

circumstances, which I shall have to mention hereafter. Shortly after the general peace was established, Captain Ball, who was now a married man, passed some time with his lady in France, and, if I mistake not, at Nantes. At the same time, and in the same town, among the other English visitors, Lord (then Captain) Nelson happened to be one. In consequence of some punctilio, as to whose business it was to pay the compliment of the first call, they never met, and this trifling affair occasioned a coldness between the two naval commanders, or in truth a mutual prejudice against each other. Some years after, both their ships being together close off Minorca and near Port Mahon, a violent storm nearly disabled Nelson's vessel, and in addition to the fury of the wind, it was night-time and the thickest darkness. Captain Ball, however, brought his vessel at length to Nelson's assistance, took his ship in tow, and used his best endeavours to bring her and his own vessel into Port Mahon. The difficulties and the dangers increased. Nelson considered the case of his own ship as desperate, and that unless she was immediately left to her own fate, both vessels would inevitably be lost. He, therefore, with the generosity natural to him, repeatedly requested Captain Ball to let him loose; and on Ball's refusal he became impetuous, and enforced his demand with passionate threats. Ball then himself took the speaking-trumpet, which the fury of the wind and waves rendered necessary, and with great solemnity and without the least disturbance of temper, called out

in reply, "I feel confident that I can bring you in safe; I therefore must not, and, by the help of Almighty God! I will not leave you!" What he promised he performed; and after they were safely anchored, Nelson came on board of Ball's ship, and embracing him with all the ardour of acknowledgment, exclaimed—"a friend in need is a friend indeed!" At this time and on this occasion commenced that firm and perfect friendship between these two great men, which was interrupted only by the death of the former. The pleasing task of dwelling on this mutual attachment I defer to that part of the present sketch which will relate to Sir Alexander Ball's opinions of men and things. It will be sufficient for the present to say, that the two men, whom Lord Nelson especially honoured, were Sir Thomas Troubridge and Sir Alexander Ball; and once, when they were both present, on some allusion made to the loss of his arm, he replied, "Who shall dare tell me that I want an arm, when I have three right arms—this (putting forward his own left one) and Ball and Troubridge?"

In the plan of the battle of the Nile it was Lord Nelson's design, that Captains Troubridge and Ball should have led up the attack. The former was stranded; and the latter, by accident of the wind, could not bring his ship into the line of battle till some time after the engagement had become general. With his characteristic forecast and activity of (what may not improperly be called) practical imagination, he had made arrangements to meet every probable contingency. All the shrouds and

fails of the ship, not absolutely necessary for its immediate management, were thoroughly wetted and so rolled up, that they were as hard and as little inflammable as so many solid cylinders of wood ; every sailor had his appropriate place and function, and a certain number were appointed as the firemen, whose sole duty it was to be on the watch if any part of the vessel should take fire : and to these men exclusively the charge of extinguishing it was committed. It was already dark when he brought his ship into action, and laid her along-side the French *L'Orient*. One particular only I shall add to the known account of the memorable engagement between these ships, and this I received from Sir Alexander Ball himself. He had previously made a combustible preparation, but which, from the nature of the engagement to be expected, he had purposed to reserve for the last emergency. But just at the time when, from several symptoms, he had every reason to believe that the enemy would soon strike to him, one of the lieutenants, without his knowledge, threw in the combustible matter ; and this it was that occasioned the tremendous explosion of that vessel, which, with the deep silence and interruption of the engagement which succeeded to it, has been justly deemed the sublimest war incident recorded in history. Yet the incident which followed, and which has not, I believe, been publicly made known, is scarcely less impressive, though its sublimity is of a different character. At the renewal of the battle, Captain Ball, though his ship was then on fire in three different parts, laid

her along-side a French eighty-four ; and a second longer obstinate contest began. The firing on the part of the French ship having at length for some time slackened, and then altogether ceased, and yet no sign given of surrender, the first lieutenant came to Captain Ball and informed him that the hearts of his men were as good as ever, but that they were so completely exhausted, that they were scarcely capable of lifting an arm. He asked, therefore, whether, as the enemy had now ceased firing, the men might be permitted to lie down by their guns for a short time. After some reflection, Sir Alexander acceded to the proposal, taking of course the proper precautions to rouse them again at the moment he thought requisite. Accordingly, with the exception of himself, his officers, and the appointed watch, the ship's crew lay down, each in the place to which he was stationed, and slept for twenty minutes. They were then roused ; and started up, as Sir Alexander expressed it, more like men out of an ambush than from sleep, so co-instantaneously did they all obey the summons ! They recommenced their fire, and in a few minutes the enemy surrendered ; and it was soon after discovered that during that interval, and almost immediately after the French ship had first ceased firing, the crew had sunk down by their guns, and there slept, almost by the side, as it were, of their sleeping enemy.



ESSAY V.

Whose powers shed round him in the common strife
 Or mild concerns of ordinary life
 A constant influence, a peculiar grace ;
 But who if he be called upon to face
 Some awful moment, to which heaven has join'd
 Great issues, good or bad for human kind,
 Is happy as a lover, is attired
 With sudden brightness like a man inspired ;
 And through the heat of conflict keeps the law
 In calmness made, and sees what he foresaw.

WORDSWORTH.*

AN accessibility to the sentiments of others on subjects of importance often accompanies feeble minds, yet it is not the less a true and constituent part of practical greatness, when it exists wholly free from that passiveness to impression which renders counsel itself injurious to certain characters, and from that weakness of heart which, in the literal sense of the word, is always craving advice. Exempt from all such imperfections, say rather in perfect harmony with the excellencies that preclude them, this openness to the influxes of good sense and information, from whatever quarter they

* The Christian Warrior.—*Ed.*

might come, equally characterized Lord Nelson and Sir Alexander Ball, though each displayed it in the way best suited to his natural temper. The former with easy hand collected, as it passed by him, whatever could add to his own stores, appropriated what he could assimilate, and levied subsidies of knowledge from all the accidents of social life and familiar intercourse. Even at the jovial board, and in the height of unrestrained merriment, a casual suggestion, that flashed a new light on his mind, changed the boon companion into the hero and the man of genius; and with the most graceful transition he would make his company as serious as himself. When the taper of his genius seemed extinguished, it was still surrounded by an inflammable atmosphere of its own, and rekindled at the first approach of light, and not seldom at a distance which made it seem to flame up self-revived. In Sir Alexander Ball, the same excellence was more an affair of system: and he would listen even to weak men, with a patience, which, in so careful an economist of time, always demanded my admiration, and not seldom excited my wonder. It was one of his maxims, that a man may suggest what he cannot give: adding, that a wild or silly plan had more than once, from the vivid sense and distinct perception of its folly, occasioned him to see what ought to be done in a new light, or with a clearer insight. There is, indeed, a hopeless sterility, a mere negation of sense and thought, which, suggesting neither difference nor contrast,

cannot even furnish hints for recollection. But on the other hand, there are minds so whimsically constituted, that they may sometimes be profitably interpreted by contraries, a process of which the great Tycho Brahe is said to have availed himself in the case of the little lackwit, who used to sit and mutter at his feet while he was studying. A mind of this sort we may compare to a magnetic needle, the poles of which had been suddenly reversed by a flash of lightning, or other more obscure accident of nature. It may be safely concluded, that to those whose judgment or information he respected, Sir Alexander Ball did not content himself with giving access and attention. No! he seldom failed of consulting them whenever the subject permitted any disclosure; and where secrecy was necessary, he well knew how to acquire their opinion without exciting even a conjecture concerning his immediate object.

Yet, with all this readiness of attention, and with all this zeal in collecting the sentiments of the well-informed, never was a man more completely uninfluenced by authority than Sir Alexander Ball, never one who sought less to tranquillize his own doubts by the mere suffrage and coincidence of others. The ablest suggestions had no conclusive weight with him, till he had abstracted the opinion from its author, till he had reduced it into a part of his own mind. The thoughts of others were always acceptable, as affording him at least a chance of adding to his materials for reflection;

but they never directed his judgment, much less superseded it. He even made a point of guarding against additional confidence in the suggestions of his own mind, from finding that a person of talents had formed the same conviction, unless the person, at the same time, furnished some new argument, or had arrived at the same conclusion by a different road. *On the latter circumstance he set an especial value and, I may almost say, courted the company and conversation of those, whose pursuits had least resembled his own, if he thought them men of clear and comprehensive faculties.* During the period of our intimacy, scarcely a week passed, in which he did not desire me to think on some particular subject, and to give him the result in writing. Most frequently by the time I had fulfilled his request, he would have written down his own thoughts, and then, with the true simplicity of a great mind, as free from ostentation as it was above jealousy, he would collate the two papers in my presence, and never expressed more pleasure than in the few instances, in which I had happened to light on all the arguments and points of view which had occurred to himself, with some additional reasons which had escaped him. A single new argument delighted him more than the most perfect coincidence, unless, as before stated, the train of thought had been very different from his own, and yet just and logical. He had one quality of mind, which I have heard attributed to the late Mr. Fox, that of deriving a keen pleasure from clear and

powerful reasoning for its own sake, a quality in the intellect which is nearly connected with veracity and a love of justice in the moral character.*

Valuing in others merits which he himself possessed, Sir Alexander Ball felt no jealous apprehension of great talent. Unlike those vulgar functionaries, whose place is too big for them, a truth which they attempt to disguise from themselves, and yet feel, he was under no necessity of arming himself against the natural superiority of genius by factitious contempt and an industrious association of extravagance and impracticability with every deviation from the ordinary routine; as the geographers in the middle ages used to designate, on their meagre maps, the greater part of the world, as deserts or wildernesses inhabited by griffins and

* It may not be amiss to add, that the pleasure from the perception of truth was so well poised and regulated by the equal or greater delight in utility, that his love of real accuracy was accompanied with a proportionate dislike of that hollow appearance of it, which may be produced by turns of phrase, words placed in balanced antithesis, and those epigrammatic points that pass for subtle and luminous distinctions with ordinary readers, but are most commonly translatable into mere truisms or trivialities, if indeed they contain any meaning at all. Having observed in some casual conversation, that though there were doubtless masses of matter unorganized, I saw no ground for asserting a mass of unorganized matter; Sir A. B. paused, and then said to me, with that frankness of manner which made his very rebukes gratifying, "The distinction is just, and, now I understand you, abundantly obvious; but hardly worth the trouble of your inventing a puzzle of words to make it appear otherwise." I trust the rebuke was not lost on me.

chimæras. Competent to weigh each system or project by its own arguments, he did not need these preventive charms and cautionary amulets against delusion. He endeavoured to make talent instrumental to his purposes in whatever shape it appeared, and with whatever imperfections it might be accompanied; but wherever talent was blended with moral worth, he sought it out, loved and cherished it. If it had pleased Providence to preserve his life, and to place him on the same course on which Nelson ran his race of glory, there are two points in which Sir Alexander Ball would most closely have resembled his illustrious friend. The first is, that in his enterprises and engagements he would have thought nothing done, till all had been done that was possible :

Nil actum reputans, si quid superesset agendum.

The second, that he would have called forth all the talent and virtue that existed within his sphere of influence, and created a band of heroes, a gradation of officers, strong in head and strong in heart, worthy to have been his companions and his successors in fame and public usefulness.

Never was greater discernment shown in the selection of a fit agent, than when Sir Alexander Ball was stationed off the coast of Malta to intercept the supplies destined for the French garrison, and to watch the movements of the French commanders, and those of the inhabitants who had been so basely betrayed into their power. Encouraged by the well-timed promises of the English

captain, the Maltese rose through all their castles (or country towns) and themselves commenced the work of their emancipation, by storming the citadel at Città Vecchia, the ancient metropolis of Malta, and the central height of the island. Without discipline, without a military leader, and almost without arms, these brave peasants succeeded, and destroyed the French garrison by throwing them over the battlements into the trench of the citadel. In the course of this blockade, and of the tedious siege of Valetta, Sir Alexander Ball displayed all that strength of character, that variety and versatility of talent, and that sagacity, derived in part from habitual circumspection, but which, when the occasion demanded it, appeared intuitive and like an instinct; at the union of which, in the same man, one of our oldest naval commanders once told me, "he could never exhaust his wonder." The citizens of Valetta were fond of relating their astonishment, and that of the French, at Captain Ball's ship wintering at anchor out of the reach of the guns, in a depth of fathom unexampled, on the assured impracticability of which the garrison had rested their main hope of regular supplies. Nor can I forget, or remember, without some portion of my original feeling, the solemn enthusiasm with which a venerable old man, belonging to one of the distant castles, showed me the sea coomb, where their father Ball, (for so they commonly called him) first landed; and afterwards pointed out the very place, on which he first stepped on

their island, while the countenances of his town's-men, who accompanied him, gave lively proofs that the old man's enthusiasm was the representative of the common feeling.

There is no reason to suppose, that Sir Alexander Ball was at any time chargeable with that weakness so frequent in Englishmen, and so injurious to our interests abroad, of despising the inhabitants of other countries, of losing all their good qualities in their vices, of making no allowance for those vices, from their religious or political impediments, and still more of mistaking for vices a mere difference of manners and customs. But if ever he had any of this erroneous feeling, he completely freed himself from it by living among the Maltese during their arduous trials, as long as the French continued masters of the capital. He witnessed their virtues, and learned to understand in what various shapes and even disguises the valuable parts of human nature may exist. In many individuals, whose littleness and meanness in the common intercourse of life would have stamped them at once as contemptible and worthless with ordinary Englishmen, he had found such virtues of disinterested patriotism, fortitude, and self-denial, as would have done honour to an ancient Roman.

There exists in England a gentlemanly character, a gentlemanly feeling, very different even from that, which is the most like it, the character of a well-born Spaniard, and unexampled in the rest of Europe. This feeling probably originated in the

fortunate circumstance, that the titles of our English nobility follow the law of their property, and are inherited by the eldest sons only. From this source, under the influences of our constitution and of our astonishing trade, it has diffused itself in different modifications through the whole country. The uniformity of our dress among all classes above that of the day labourer, while it has authorized all classes to assume the appearance of gentlemen, has at the same time inspired the wish to conform their manners, and still more their ordinary actions in social intercourse, to their notions of the gentlemanly, the most commonly received attribute of which character is a certain generosity in trifles. On the other hand, the encroachments of the lower classes on the higher, occasioned and favoured by this resemblance in exteriors, by this absence of any cognizable marks of distinction, have rendered each class more reserved and jealous in their general communion, and far more than our climate, or natural temper, have caused that haughtiness and reserve in our outward demeanor, which is so generally complained of among foreigners. Far be it from me to depreciate the value of this gentlemanly feeling : I respect it under all its forms and varieties, from the House of Commons to the gentlemen in the one shilling gallery. It is always the ornament of virtue, and oftentimes a support ; but it is a wretched substitute for it. Its worth, as a moral good, is by no means in proportion to its value, as a social advantage. These observations

are not irrelevant: for to the want of reflection, that this diffusion of gentlemanly feeling among us is not the growth of our moral excellence, but the effect of various accidental advantages peculiar to England; to our not considering that it is unreasonable and uncharitable to expect the same consequences, where the same causes have not existed to produce them; and, lastly, to our proneness to regard the absence of this character (which, as I have before said, does, for the greater part, and, in the common apprehension, consist in a certain frankness and generosity in the detail of action) as decisive against the sum total of personal or national worth; we must, I am convinced, attribute a large portion of that conduct, which in many instances has left the inhabitants of countries conquered or appropriated by Great Britain, doubtful whether the various solid advantages which they derived from our protection and just government were not bought dearly by the wounds inflicted on their feelings and prejudices, by the contemptuous and insolent demeanor of the English as individuals. The reader who bears this remark in mind, will meet, in the course of this narrative, more than one passage that will serve as its comment and illustration.

It was, I know, a general opinion among the English in the Mediterranean, that Sir Alexander Ball thought too well of the Maltese, and did not share in the enthusiasm of Britons concerning their own superiority. To the former part of the

charge, I shall only reply at present, that a more venial and almost desirable fault could scarcely be attributed to a governor, than that of a strong attachment to the people whom he was sent to govern. The latter part of the charge is false, if we are to understand by it, that he did not think his countrymen superior on the whole to the other nations of Europe ; but it is true, as far as relates to his belief, that the English thought themselves still better than they are ; that they dwelt on, and exaggerated their national virtues, and weighed them by the opposite vices of foreigners, instead of the virtues which those foreigners possessed, and they themselves wanted. Above all, as statesmen, we must consider qualities by their practical uses. Thus he entertained no doubt, that the English were superior to all others in the kind and the degree of their courage, which is marked by far greater enthusiasm than the courage of the Germans and northern nations, and by a far greater steadiness and self-subsistancy than that of the French. It is more closely connected with the character of the individual. The courage of an English army (he used to say) is the sum total of the courage which the individual soldiers bring with them to it, rather than of that which they derive from it. This remark of Sir Alexander's was forcibly recalled to my mind when I was at Naples. A Russian and an English regiment were drawn up together in the same square :—" See," said a Neapolitan to me, who had mistaken me for one

of his countrymen, “there is but one face in that whole regiment, while in that” (pointing to the English) “every soldier has a face of his own.” On the other hand, there are qualities scarcely less requisite to the completion of the military character, in which Sir A. did not hesitate to think the English inferior to the continental nations; as for instance, both in the power and the disposition to endure privations; in the friendly temper necessary, when troops of different nations are to act in concert; in their obedience to the regulations of their commanding officers, respecting the treatment of the inhabitants of the countries through which they are marching, as well as in many other points, not immediately connected with their conduct in the field; and, above all, in sobriety and temperance. During the siege of Valetta, especially during the fore distress to which the besiegers were for some time exposed from the failure of provision, Sir Alexander Ball had an ample opportunity of observing and weighing the separate merits and demerits of the native and of the English troops; and surely since the publication of Sir John Moore’s campaign, there can be no just offence taken, though I should say, that before the walls of Valetta, as well as in the plains of Galicia, an indignant commander might, with too great propriety, have addressed the English soldiery in the words of an old dramatist—

Will you still owe your virtues to your bellies?
And only then think nobly when y^e are full?

Doth fodder keep you honest? Are you bad
 When out of flesh? And think you't an excuse
 Of vile and ignominious actions, that
 Y'are lean and out of liking? *

From the first insurrectionary movement to the final departure of the French from the island, though the civil and military powers and the whole of the island, save Valetta, were in the hands of the peasantry, not a single act of excess can be charged against the Maltese, if we except the razing of one house at Città Vecchia belonging to a notorious and abandoned traitor, the creature and hireling of the French. In no instance did they injure, insult, or plunder, any one of the native nobility, or employ even the appearance of force toward them, except in the collection of the lead and iron from their houses and gardens, in order to supply themselves with bullets: and this very appearance was assumed from the generous wish to shelter the nobles from the resentment of the French, should the patriotic efforts of the peasantry prove unsuccessful. At the dire command of famine the Maltese troops did indeed once force their way to the ovens, in which the bread for the British soldiery was baked, and were clamorous that an equal division should be made. I mention this unpleasant circumstance, because it brought into proof the firmness of Sir Alexander Ball's character, his presence of mind, and generous disregard of danger and personal responsibility, where the

* Cartwright, *Love's Convert*, act i. sc. 1.

slavery or emancipation, the misery or the happiness, of an innocent and patriotic people were involved; and because his conduct in this exigency evinced that his general habits of circumspection and deliberation were the results of wisdom and complete self-possession, and not the easy virtues of a spirit constitutionally timorous and hesitating. He was sitting at table with the principal British officers, when a certain general addressed him in strong and violent terms concerning this outrage of the Maltese, reminding him of the necessity of exerting his commanding influence in the present case, or the consequences must be taken. "What," replied Sir Alexander Ball, "would you have us do? Would you have us threaten death to men dying with famine? Can you suppose that the hazard of being shot will weigh with whole regiments acting under a common necessity? Does not the extremity of hunger take away all difference between men and animals? and is it not as absurd to appeal to the prudence of a body of men starving, as to a herd of famished wolves? No, general, I will not degrade myself or outrage humanity by menacing famine with massacre! More effectual means must be taken." With these words he rose and left the room, and having first consulted with Sir Thomas Troubridge, he determined at his own risk on a step, which the extreme necessity warranted, and which the conduct of the Neapolitan court amply justified. For this court, though terror-stricken by the French, was still actuated by

hatred to the English and a jealousy of their power in the Mediterranean; and this in so strange and senseless a manner, that we must join the extremes of imbecility and treachery in the same cabinet, in order to find it comprehensible.* Though the very existence of Naples and Sicily, as a nation, depended wholly and exclusively on British support; though the royal family owed their personal safety to the British fleet; though not only their dominions and their rank, but the liberty and even the lives of Ferdinand and his family, were interwoven with our success; yet with an infatuation scarcely credible, the most affecting representations of the distress of the besiegers, and of the utter insecurity of Sicily if the French remained possessors of Malta, were treated with neglect; and urgent remonstrances for the permission of importing corn

* It cannot be doubted, that the sovereign himself was kept in a state of delusion. Both his understanding and his moral principles are far better than could reasonably be expected from the infamous mode of his education: if indeed the systematic preclusion of all knowledge, and the unrestrained indulgence of his passions, adopted by the Spanish court for the purposes of preserving him dependent, can be called by the name of education. Of the other influencing persons in the Neapolitan government, Mr. Leckie has given us a true and lively account. It will be greatly to the advantage of the present narrative, if the reader should have previously perused Mr. Leckie's pamphlet on the state of Sicily: the facts which I shall have occasion to mention hereafter will reciprocally confirm and be confirmed by the documents furnished in that most interesting work; in which I see but one blemish of importance, namely, that the author appears too frequently to consider justice and true policy as capable of being contradicting.

from Messina were answered only by sanguinary edicts precluding all supply. Sir Alexander Ball sent for his first lieutenant, and gave him orders to proceed immediately to the port of Messina, and there to seize and bring with him to Malta the ships laden with corn, of the number of which Sir Alexander had received accurate information. These orders were executed without delay, to the great delight and profit of the ship owners and proprietors; the necessity of raising the siege was removed; and the author of the measure waited in calmness for the consequences that might result to himself personally. But not a complaint, not a murmur, proceeded from the court of Naples. The sole result was, that the governor of Malta became an especial object of its hatred, its fear, and its respect.

The whole of this tedious siege, from its commencement to the signing of the capitulation, called forth into constant activity the rarest and most difficult virtues of a commanding mind; virtues of no show or splendour in the vulgar apprehension, yet more infallible characteristics of true greatness than the most unequivocal displays of enterprise and active daring. Scarcely a day passed, in which Sir Alexander Ball's patience, forbearance, and inflexible constancy, were not put to the severest trial. He had not only to remove the misunderstandings that arose between the Maltese and their allies, to settle the differences among the Maltese themselves, and to organize their efforts:

he was likewise engaged in the more difficult and unthankful task of counteracting the weariness, discontent, and despondency, of his own countrymen; —a task, however, which he accomplished by management and address, and an alternation of real firmness with apparent yielding. During many months he remained the only Englishman who did not think the siege hopeless, and the object worthless. He often spoke of the time in which he resided at the country seat of the grand master at St. Antonio, four miles from Valetta, as perhaps the most trying period of his life. For some weeks Captain Vivian was his sole English companion, of whom, as his partner in anxiety, he always expressed himself with affectionate esteem. Sir Alexander Ball's presence was absolutely necessary to the Maltese, who, accustomed to be governed by him, became incapable of acting in concert without his immediate influence. In the out-burst of popular emotion, the impulse, which produces an insurrection, is for a brief while its sufficient pilot; the attraction constitutes the cohesion, and the common provocation, supplying an immediate object, not only unites, but directs, the multitude. But this first impulse had passed away, and Sir Alexander Ball was the one individual who possessed the general confidence. On him they relied with implicit faith: and even after they had long enjoyed the blessings of British government and protection, it was still remarkable with what child-like helplessness they were in the habit of applying

to him, even in their private concerns. It seemed as if they thought him made on purpose to think for them all. Yet his situation at St. Antonio was one of great peril: and he attributed his preservation to the dejection, which had now begun to prey on the spirits of the French garrison, and which rendered them unenterprising and almost passive, aided by the dread which the nature of the country inspired. For subdivided as it was into small fields, scarcely larger than a cottage-garden, and each of these little squares of land inclosed with substantial stone walls; these too from the necessity of having the fields perfectly level, rising in tiers above each other; the whole of the inhabited part of the island was an effective fortification for all the purposes of annoyance and offensive warfare. Sir Alexander Ball exerted himself successfully in procuring information respecting the state and temper of the garrison, and by the assistance of the clergy and the almost universal fidelity of the Maltese, contrived that the spies in the pay of the French should be in truth his own most confidential agents. He had already given splendid proofs that he could outfight them; but here, and in his after diplomatic intercourse previously to the recommencement of the war, he likewise out-witted them. He once told me with a smile, as we were conversing on the practice of laying wagers, that he was sometimes inclined to think that the final perseverance in the siege was not a little due to several valuable bets of his own, he

well knowing at the time, and from information which himself alone possessed, that he should certainly lose them. Yet this artifice had a considerable effect in suspending the impatience of the officers, and in supplying topics for dispute and conversation. At length, however, the two French frigates, the sailing of which had been the subject of these wagers, left the great harbour on the 24th of August, 1800, with a part of the garrison; and one of them soon became a prize to the English. Sir Alexander Ball related to me the circumstances which occasioned the escape of the other; but I do not recollect them with sufficient accuracy to dare repeat them in this place. On the 15th of September following, the capitulation was signed, and after a blockade of two years the English obtained possession of Valetta, and remained masters of the whole island and its dependencies.

Anxious not to give offence, but more anxious to communicate the truth, it is not without pain that I find myself under the moral obligation of remonstrating against the silence concerning Sir Alexander Ball's services or the transfer of them to others. More than once has the latter roused my indignation in the reported speeches of the House of Commons; and as to the former, I need only state that in Rees's Encyclopædia there is an historical article of considerable length under the word Malta, in which Sir Alexander's name does not once occur! During a residence of eighteen months in that island, I possessed and availed myself

of the best possible means of information, not only from eye-witnesses, but likewise from the principal agents themselves. And I now thus publicly and unequivocally assert, that to Sir A. Ball pre-eminently—and if I had said, to Sir A. Ball alone, the ordinary use of the word under such circumstances would bear me out—the capture and the preservation of Malta were owing, with every blessing that a powerful mind and a wise heart could confer on its docile and grateful inhabitants. With a similar pain I proceed to avow my sentiments on this capitulation, by which Malta was delivered up to his Britannic Majesty and his allies, without the least mention made of the Maltese. With a warmth honourable both to his head and his heart, Sir Alexander Ball pleaded, as not less a point of sound policy than of plain justice, that the Maltese, by some representative, should be made a party in the capitulation, and a joint subscriber in the signature. They had never been the slaves or the property of the Knights of St. John, but freemen and the true landed proprietors of the country, the civil and military government of which, under certain restrictions, had been vested in that order; yet checked by the rights and influences of the clergy and the native nobility, and by the customs and ancient laws of the island. This trust the Knights had, with the blackest treason and the most profligate perjury, betrayed and abandoned. The right of government of course reverted to the landed proprietors and the clergy. Animated by

a just sense of this right, the Maltese had risen of their own accord, had contended for it in defiance of death and danger, had fought bravely, and endured patiently. Without undervaluing the military assistance afterwards furnished by Great Britain (though how scanty this was before the arrival of General Pigot is well known), it remained undeniable, that the Maltese had taken the greatest share both in the fatigues and in the privations consequent on the siege; and that had not the greatest virtues and the most exemplary fidelity been uniformly displayed by them, the English troops (they not being more numerous than they had been for the greater part of the two years) could not possibly have remained before the fortifications of Valetta, defended as that city was by a French garrison which greatly outnumbered the British besiegers. Still less could there have been the least hope of ultimate success; as if any part of the Maltese peasantry had been friendly to the French, or even indifferent, if they had not all indeed been most zealous and persevering in their hostility towards them, it would have been impracticable so to blockade that island as to have precluded the arrival of supplies. If the siege had proved unsuccessful, the Maltese were well aware that they should be exposed to all the horrors which revenge and wounded pride could dictate to an unprincipled, rapacious, and sanguinary soldiery; and now that success had crowned their efforts, was this to be their reward, that their own allies were

to bargain for them with the French as for a herd of slaves, whom the French had before purchased from a former proprietor? If it be urged, reasoned Sir A. B., that there is no established government in Malta, is it not equally true that through the whole population of the island there is not a single dissentient;—and thus that the chief inconvenience, which an established authority is to obviate, is virtually removed by the admitted fact of their unanimity? And have they not a bishop and a dignified clergy, their judges and municipal magistrates, who were at all times sharers in the power of the government, and now, supported by the unanimous suffrage of the inhabitants, have a rightful claim to be considered as its representatives? Will it not be oftener said than answered, that the main difference between French and English injustice rests in this point alone, that the French seized on the Maltese without any previous pretences of friendship, while the English procured possession of the island by means of their friendly promises, and by the co-operation of the natives afforded in confident reliance on these promises? The impolicy of refusing the signature on the part of the Maltese was equally evident; since such refusal could answer no one purpose but that of alienating their affections by a wanton insult to their feelings. For the Maltese were not only ready but desirous and eager to place themselves at the same time under British protection, to take the oaths of loyalty as subjects of the British

crown, and to acknowledge their island to belong to it. These representations, however, were overruled : and I dare affirm, from my own experience in the Mediterranean, that our conduct in this instance aggravated the impression which had been made at Corsica, Minorca, and elsewhere, and was often referred to by men of reflection in Sicily, who have more than once said to me, “ a connection with Great Britain, with the consequent extension and security of our commerce, are indeed great blessings : but who can rely on their permanence ; or that we shall not be made to pay bitterly for our zeal as partizans of England, whenever it shall suit its plans to deliver us back to our old oppressors ? ”






ESSAY VI.

The way of ancient ordinance, though it winds,
 Is yet no devious way. Straight forward goes
 The lightning's path; and straight the fearful path
 Of the cannon-ball. Direct it flies and rapid,
 Shattering that it may reach, and shattering what it reaches.
 My son! the road, the human being travels,
 That, on which blessing comes and goes, doth follow
 The river's course, the valley's playful windings,
 Curves round the corn-field and the hill of vines,
 Honouring the holy bounds of property!
 ————— There exists
 A higher than the warrior's excellence.

WALLENSTEIN.*

APTAIN BALL'S services in Malta
 were honoured with his sovereign's
 approbation, transmitted in a letter
 from the secretary Dundaſ, and with
 a baronetcy. A thousand pounds† were at the
 ſame time directed to be paid him from the Malteſe

* Part I. act 1. ſc. 4.—*Ed.*

† I ſcarce know whether it be worth mentioning, that
 this ſum remained undemanded till the ſpring of the year
 1805: at which time, during an examination of the trea-
 ſury accounts, I obſerved the circumſtance and noticed it to
 the governor, who had ſuffered it to eſcape altogether from
 his memory, for the latter years at leaſt. The value at-
 tached to the preſent by the receiver, muſt have depended
 on his conſtruction of its purpoſe and meaning; for, in a pe-

treasury. The best and most appropriate addition to the applause of his king and his country, Sir Alexander Ball found in the feelings and faithful affection of the Maltese. The enthusiasm manifested in reverential gestures and shouts of triumph whenever their friend and deliverer appeared in public, was the utterance of a deep feeling, and in nowise the mere ebullition of animal sensibility; which is not indeed a part of the Maltese character. The truth of this observation will not be doubted by any person, who has witnessed the religious processions in honour of the favorite saints, both at Valetta and at Messina or Palermo, and who must have been struck with the contrast between the apparent apathy, or at least the perfect sobriety, of the Maltese, and the fanatical agitations of the Sicilian populace. Among the latter each man's soul seems hardly containable in his body, like a prisoner, whose jail is on fire, flying madly from one barred outlet to another; while the for-

cuniary point of view, the sum was not a moiety of what Sir Alexander had expended from his private fortune during the blockade. His immediate appointment to the government of the island, so earnestly prayed for by the Maltese, would doubtless have furnished a less questionable proof that his services were as highly estimated by the ministry as they were graciously accepted by his sovereign. But this was withholden as long as it remained possible to doubt, whether great talents, joined to local experience, and the confidence and affection of the inhabitants, might not be dispensed with in the person entrusted with that government. *Crimen ingrati animi quod magnis ingeniis haud raro obicitur sæpius nil aliud est quam perspicacia quædam in causam beneficii collati.*

mer might suggest the suspicion, that their bodies were on the point of sinking into the same slumber with their understandings. But their political deliverance was a thing that came home to their hearts, and intertwined itself with their most impassioned recollections, personal and patriotic. To Sir Alexander Ball exclusively the Maltese themselves attributed their emancipation : on him too they rested their hopes of the future. Whenever he appeared in Valetta, the passengers on each side, through the whole length of the street stopped, and remained uncovered till he had passed : the very clamours of the market-place were hushed at his entrance, and then exchanged for shouts of joy and welcome. Even after the lapse of years he never appeared in any one of their casals,* which did not lie in the direct road between Valetta and St. Antonio, his summer residence, but the women and children, with such of the men who were not at labour in their fields, fell into ranks, and followed, or preceded him, singing the Maltese song which had been made in his honour, and which was scarcely less familiar to the inhabitants of

* It was the governor's custom to visit every casal throughout the island once, if not twice, in the course of each summer; and during my residence there, I had the honour of being his constant, and most often, his only companion in these rides; to which I owe some of the happiest and most instructive hours of my life. In the poorest house of the most distant casal two rude paintings were sure to be found : a picture of the Virgin and Child; and a portrait of Sir Alexander Ball.

Malta and Gozo, than God save the King to Britons. *When he went to the gate through the city, the young men refrained talking; and the aged arose and stood up. When the ear heard, then it blessed him; and when the eye saw him, it gave witness to him; because he delivered the poor that cried, and the fatherless, and those that had none to help them. The blessing of them that were ready to perish came upon him; and he caused the widow's heart to sing for joy.*

These feelings were afterwards amply justified by his administration of the government; and the very excesses of their gratitude on their first deliverance proved, in the end, only to be acknowledgments antedated. For some time after the departure of the French, the distress was so general and so severe, that a large portion of the lower classes became mendicants, and one of the greatest thoroughfares of Valetta still retains the name of the "*Nix Mangiare Stairs*," from the crowd who used there to assail the ears of the passengers with the cries of "*nix mangiare*," or "nothing to eat," the former word *nix* being the low German pronunciation of *nichts*, nothing. By what means it was introduced into Malta, I know not; but it became the common vehicle both of solicitation and refusal, the Maltese thinking it an English word, and the English supposing it to be Maltese. I often felt it as a pleasing remembrancer of the evil day gone by, when a tribe of little children, quite naked, as is the custom of that climate,

and each with a pair of gold ear-rings in its ears, and all fat and beautifully proportioned, would suddenly leave their play, and, looking round to see that their parents were not in sight, change their shouts of merriment for "*nix mangiare!*" awkwardly imitating the plaintive tones of mendicancy; while the white teeth in their little swarthy faces gave a splendour to the happy and confessing laugh, with which they received the good-humoured rebuke or refusal, and ran back to their former sport.

In the interim between the capitulation of the French garrison and Sir Alexander Ball's appointment as his Majesty's civil commissioner for Malta, his zeal for the Maltese was neither suspended, nor unproductive of important benefits. He was enabled to remove many prejudices and misunderstandings; and to persons of no inconsiderable influence gave juster notions of the true importance of the island to Great Britain. He displayed the magnitude of the trade of the Mediterranean in its existing state; showed the immense extent to which it might be carried, and the hollowness of the opinion, that this trade was attached to the south of France by any natural or indissoluble bond of connection. I have some reason likewise for believing, that his wise and patriotic representations prevented Malta from being made the seat of, and pretext for, a numerous civil establishment, in hapless imitation of Corsica, Ceylon, and the Cape of Good Hope. It was at least generally rumoured, that it

had been in the contemplation of the ministry to appoint Sir Ralph Abercrombie as governor, with a salary of 10,000*l.* a year, and to reside in England, while one of his countrymen was to be the lieutenant-governor, at 5,000*l.* a year; to which were to be added a long *et cetera* of other offices and places of proportionale emolument. This threatened appendix to the state calendar may have existed only in the imaginations of the reporters, yet inspired some uneasy apprehensions in the minds of many well-wishers to the Maltese, who knew that—for a foreign settlement at least, and one too possessing in all the ranks and functions of society an ample population of its own—such a stately and wide-branching tree of patronage, though delightful to the individuals who are to pluck its golden apples, sheds, like the manchineel, unwholesome and corrosive dews on the multitude who are to rest beneath its shade. It need not, however, be doubted, that Sir Alexander Ball would exert himself to preclude any such intention, by stating and evincing the extreme impolicy and injustice of the plan, as well as its utter inutility, in the case of Malta. With the exception of the governor and of the public secretary, both of whom undoubtedly should be natives of Great Britain, and appointed by the British government, there was no civil office that could be of the remotest advantage to the island which was not already filled by the natives, and the functions of which none could perform so well as they. The number of inhabitants (he would

state) was prodigious compared with the extent of the island, though from the fear of the Moors one-fourth of its surface remained unpeopled and uncultivated. To deprive, therefore, the middle and lower classes of such places as they had been accustomed to hold, would be cruel ; while the places holden by the nobility were, for the greater part, such as none but natives could perform the duties of. By any innovation we should affront the higher classes and alienate the affections of all, not only without any imaginable advantage but with the certainty of great loss. Were Englishmen to be employed, the salaries must be increased four-fold, and would yet be scarcely worth acceptance ; and in higher offices, such as those of the civil and criminal judges, the salaries must be augmented more than ten-fold. For, greatly to the credit of their patriotism and moral character, the Maltese gentry sought these places as honourable distinctions, which endeared them to their fellow-countrymen, and at the same time rendered the yoke of the order somewhat less grievous and galling. With the exception of the Maltese secretary, whose situation was one of incessant labour, and who at the same time performed the duties of law counsellor to the government, the highest salaries scarcely exceeded 100*l.* a year, and were barely sufficient to defray the increased expenses of the functionaries for an additional equipage, or one of more imposing appearance. Besides, it was of importance that the person placed at the head of that government

should be looked up to by the natives, and possess the means of distinguishing and rewarding those who had been most faithful and zealous in their attachment to Great Britain, and hostile to their former tyrants. The number of the employments to be conferred would give considerable influence to his Majesty's civil representative, while the trifling amount of the emolument attached to each precluded all temptation of abusing it.

Sir Alexander Ball would likewise, it is probable, urge, that the commercial advantages of Malta, which were most intelligible to the English public, and best fitted to render our retention of the island popular, must necessarily be of very slow growth, though finally they would become great, and of an extent not to be calculated. For this reason, therefore, it was highly desirable, that the possession should be, and appear to be, at least inexpensive. After the British Government had made one advance for a stock of corn sufficient to place the island a year before hand, the sum total drawn from Great Britain need not exceed 25, or at most 30,000*l.* annually; excluding of course the expenditure connected with our own military and navy, and the repair of the fortifications, which latter expense ought to be much less than at Gibraltar, from the multitude and low wages of the labourers in Malta, and from the softness and admirable quality of the stone. Indeed much more might safely be promised on the assumption that a wise and generous system of policy would be adopted and per-

severed in. The monopoly of the Maltese corn-trade by the government formed an exception to a general rule, and by a strange, yet valid, anomaly in the operations of political economy, was not more necessary than advantageous to the inhabitants. The chief reason is, that the produce of the island itself barely suffices for one-fourth of its inhabitants, although fruits and vegetables form so large a part of their nourishment. Meantime the harbours of Malta, and its equi-distance from Europe, Asia, and Africa, gave it a vast and unnatural importance in the present relations of the great European powers, and imposed on its government, whether native or dependent, the necessity of considering the whole island as a single garrison, the provisioning of which could not be trusted to the casualties of ordinary commerce. What is actually necessary is seldom injurious. Thus in Malta bread is better and cheaper on an average than in Italy or the coast of Barbary : while a similar interference with the corn-trade in Sicily impoverishes the inhabitants and keeps the agriculture in a state of barbarism. But the point in question is the expense to Great Britain. Whether the monopoly be good or evil in itself, it remains true, that in this established usage, and in the gradual inclosure of the uncultivated district, such resources exist as without the least oppression might render the civil government in Valetta independent of the Treasury at home, finally taking upon itself even the repair of the fortifications, and thus realize one

instance of an important possession that costs the country nothing.

But now the time arrived, which threatened to frustrate the patriotism of the Maltese themselves and all the zealous efforts of their disinterested friend. Soon after the war had for the first time become indisputably just and necessary, the people at large, and a majority of independent senators, incapable, as it might seem, of translating their fanatical anti-Jacobinism into a well-grounded, yet equally impassioned, anti-Gallicanism, grew impatient for peace, or rather for a name, under which the most terrific of all wars would be incessantly waged against us. Our conduct was not much wiser than that of the weary traveller, who having proceeded half way on his journey, procured a short rest for himself by getting up behind a chaise which was going the contrary road. In the strange treaty of Amiens, in which we neither recognized our former relations with France, nor with the other European powers, nor formed any new ones, the compromise concerning Malta formed the prominent feature: and its nominal re-delivery to the Order of St. John was authorized in the minds of the people by Lord Nelson's opinion of its worthlessness to Great Britain in a political or naval view. It is a melancholy fact, and one that must often sadden a reflective and philanthropic mind, how little moral considerations weigh even with the noblest nations, how vain are the strongest appeals to justice, humanity, and national honour

unless when the public mind is under the immediate influence of the cheerful or vehement passions, indignation or avaricious hope. In the whole class of human infirmities there is none, that makes such loud appeals to prudence, and yet so frequently outrages its plainest dictates, as the spirit of fear. The worst cause conducted in hope is an overmatch for the noblest managed by despondence : in both cases an unnatural conjunction that recalls the old fable of Love and Death, taking each the arrows of the other by mistake. When islands that had courted British protection in reliance upon *British honour*, are with their inhabitants and proprietors abandoned to the resentment which we had tempted them to provoke, what wonder, if the opinion becomes general, that alike to England as to France, the fates and fortunes of other nations are but the counters, with which the bloody game of war is played : and that notwithstanding the great and acknowledged difference between the two governments during possession, yet the protection of France is more desirable because it is more likely to endure ? for what the French take, they keep. Often both in Sicily and Malta have I heard the case of Minorca referred to, where a considerable portion of the most respectable gentry and merchants (no provision having been made for their protection on the re-delivery of that island to Spain) expiated in dungeons the warmth and forwardness of their predilection for Great Britain.

It has been by some persons imagined that Lord

VOL. III. T

Nelson was considerably influenced, in his public declaration concerning the value of Malta, by ministerial flattery, and his own sense of the great serviceableness of that opinion to the persons in office. This supposition is, however, wholly false and groundless. His lordship's opinion was indeed greatly shaken afterwards, if not changed; but at that time he spoke in strictest correspondence with his existing convictions. He said no more than he had often previously declared to his private friends: it was the point on which, after some amicable controversy, his lordship and Sir Alexander Ball had "agreed to differ." Though the opinion itself may have lost the greatest part of its interest, and except for the historian is, as it were, superannuated; yet the grounds and causes of it, as far as they arose out of Lord Nelson's particular character, and may perhaps tend to re-enliven our recollection of a hero so deeply and justly beloved, will for ever possess an interest of their own. In an essay, too, which purports to be no more than a series of sketches and fragments, the reader, it is hoped, will readily excuse an occasional digression, and a more desultory style of narration than could be tolerated in a work of regular biography.

Lord Nelson was an admiral every inch of him. He looked at every thing, not merely in its possible relations to the naval service in general, but in its immediate bearings on his own squadron; to his officers, his men, to the particular ships themselves his affections were as strong and ardent as those of

a lover. Hence though his temper was constitutionally irritable and uneven, yet never was a commander so enthusiastically loved by men of all ranks from the captain of the fleet to the youngest ship-boy. Hence too the unexampled harmony which reigned in his fleet year after year, under circumstances that might well have undermined the patience of the best balanced dispositions, much more of men with the impetuous character of British sailors. Year after year, the same dull duties of a wearisome blockade and of doubtful policy; little if any opportunity of making prizes; and the few prizes, which accident might throw in the way, of little or no value; and when at last the occasion presented itself which would have compensated for all, then a disappointment as sudden and unexpected as it was unjust and cruel, and the cup dashed from their lips! — Add to these trials the sense of enterprises checked by feebleness and timidity elsewhere, not omitting the tiresomeness of the Mediterranean sea, sky, and climate; and the unjarring and cheerful spirit of affectionate brotherhood, which linked together the hearts of that whole squadron, will appear not less wonderful to us than admirable and affecting. When the resolution was taken of commencing hostilities against Spain, before any intelligence was sent to Lord Nelson, another admiral, with two or three ships of the line, was sent into the Mediterranean, and stationed before Cadiz, for the express purpose of intercepting the Spanish prizes. The admiral dis-

patched on this lucrative service gave no information to Lord Nelson of his arrival in the same sea, and five weeks elapsed before his lordship became acquainted with the circumstance. The prizes thus taken were immense. A month or two sufficed to enrich the commander and officers of this small and highly-favoured squadron: while to Nelson and his fleet the sense of having done their duty, and the consciousness of the glorious services which they had performed were considered, it must be presumed, as an abundant remuneration for all their toils and long-suffering! It was indeed an unexampled circumstance, that a small squadron should be sent to the station which had been long occupied by a large fleet, commanded by the darling of the navy, and the glory of the British empire, to the station where this fleet had for years been wearing away in the most barren, repulsive, and spirit-trying service, in which the navy can be employed; and that this minor squadron should be sent independently of, and without any communication with, the commander of the former fleet, for the express and solitary purpose of stepping between it and the Spanish prizes, and as soon as this short and pleasant service was performed, of bringing home the unshared booty with all possible caution and despatch. The substantial advantages of naval service were perhaps deemed of too gross a nature for men already rewarded with the grateful affections of their own country-men, and the admiration of the whole world. They were to be

awarded, therefore, on a principle of compensation to a commander less rich in fame, and whose laurels, though not scanty, were not yet sufficiently luxuriant to hide the golden crown which is the appropriate ornament of victory in the bloodless war of commercial capture. Of all the wounds which were ever inflicted on Nelson's feelings (and there were not a few), this was the deepest—this rankled most. “I had thought,” (said the gallant man, in a letter written in the first sense of the affront) “I fancied—but nay, it must have been a dream, an idle dream—yet I confess it, I did fancy, that I had done my country service; and thus they use me. It was not enough to have robbed me once before of my West-India harvest; now they have taken away the Spanish; and under what circumstances, and with what pointed aggravations! Yet, if I know my own thoughts, it is not for myself, or on my own account chiefly, that I feel the sting and the disappointment. No! it is for my brave officers; for my noble-minded friends and comrades—such a gallant set of fellows! such a band of brothers! My heart swells at the thought of them!”——

This strong attachment of the heroic admiral to his fleet, faithfully repaid by an equal attachment on their part to their admiral, had no little influence in attuning their hearts to each other; and when he died it seemed as if no man was a stranger to another: for all were made acquaintances by the rights of a common anguish. In the fleet itself,

many a private quarrel was forgotten, no more to be remembered ; many, who had been alienated, became once more good friends ; yea, many a one was reconciled to his very enemy, and loved, and (as it were) thanked him, for the bitterness of his grief, as if it had been an act of consolation to himself in an intercourse of private sympathy. The tidings arrived at Naples on the day that I returned to that city from Calabria : and never can I forget the sorrow and consternation that lay on every countenance. Even to this day there are times when I seem to see, as in a vision, separate groups and individual faces of the picture. Numbers stopped and shook hands with me, because they had seen the tears on my cheek, and conjectured that I was an Englishman ; and several, as they held my hand, burst themselves into tears. And though it may excite a smile, yet it pleased and affected me, as a proof of the goodness of the human heart struggling to exercise its kindness in spite of prejudices the most obstinate, and eager to carry on its love and honour into the life beyond life, that it was whispered about Naples that Lord Nelson had become a good Catholic before his death. The absurdity of the fiction is a sort of measurement of the fond and affectionate esteem which had ripened the pious wish of some kind individual, through all the gradations of possibility and probability, into a confident assertion believed and affirmed by hundreds. The feelings of Great Britain on this awful event have been described

well and worthily by a living poet, who has happily blended the passion and wild transitions of lyric song with the swell and solemnity of epic narration :

—Thou art fall'n ; fall'n, in the lap
Of victory. To thy country thou cam'st back,
Thou, conqueror, to triumphal Albion cam'st
A corse ! I saw before thy hearse pass on
The comrades of thy perils and renown.
The frequent tear upon their dauntless breasts
Fell. I beheld the pomp thick gather'd round
The trophied car that bore thy grac'd remains
Thro' arm'd ranks, and a nation gazing on.
Bright glow'd the sun and not a cloud distain'd
Heaven's arch of gold, but all was gloom beneath.
A holy and unutterable pang
Thrill'd on the soul. Awe and mute anguish fell
On all.—Yet high the public bosom throb'd
With triumph. And if one, 'mid that vast pomp,
If but the voice of one had shouted forth
The name of Nelson,—thou hadst pass'd along,
Thou in thy hearse to burial pass'd, as oft
Before the van of battle, proudly rode
Thy prow, down Britain's line, shout after shout
Rending the air with triumph, ere thy hand
Had lanc'd the bolt of victory.*

I introduced this digression with an apology, yet have extended it so much further than I had designed, that I must once more request my reader to excuse me. It was to be expected (I have said) that Lord Nelson would appreciate the isle of Malta from its relations to the British fleet on the Mediterranean station. It was the fashion of the day to style Egypt the key of India, and Malta the key

* Sotheby's Saul.*—*Ed.*

of Egypt. Nelson saw the hollowneſs of this metaphor: or if he only doubted its applicability in the former inſtance, he was ſure that it was falſe in the latter. Egypt might or might not be the key of India; but Malta was certainly not the key of Egypt. It was not intended to keep conſtantly two diſtinct fleets in that ſea; and the largeſt naval force at Malta would not ſuperſede the neceſſity of a ſquadron off Toulon. Malta does not lie in the direct courſe from Toulon to Alexandria: and from the nature of the winds (one time taken with another) the comparative length of the voyage to the latter port will be found far leſs than a view of the map would ſuggeſt, and in truth of little practical importance. If it were the object of the French fleet to avoid Malta in its paſſage to Egypt, the port-admiral of Valetta would in all probability receive his firſt intelligence of its courſe from Minorca or the ſquadron off Toulon, inſtead of communicating it. In what regarded the re-fitting and provisioning of the fleet, either on ordinary or extraordinary occaſions, Malta was as inconvenient as Minorca was advantageous, not only from its diſtance (which yet was ſufficient to render it almoſt uſeleſs in caſes of the moſt preſſing neceſſity, as after a ſevere action or injuries of tempeſt) but likewise from the extreme difficulty, if not impracticability, of leaving the harbour of Valetta with a N. W. wind, which often laſts for weeks together. In all theſe points his lordſhip's obſervations were perfectly juſt; and it muſt be

conceded by all persons acquainted with the situation and circumstances of Malta, that its importance, as a British possession, if not exaggerated on the whole, was unduly magnified in several important particulars. Thus Lord Minto, in a speech delivered at a country meeting and afterwards published, affirmed, that upon the supposition (which no one could consider as unlikely to take place) that the court of Naples should be compelled to act under the influence of France, and that the Barbary powers were unfriendly to us, either in consequence of French intrigues or from their own caprice and insolence, there would not be a single port, harbour, bay, creek, or roadstead in the whole Mediterranean, from which our men of war could obtain a single ox or a hoghead of fresh water,—unless Great Britain retained possession of Malta. The noble speaker seems not to have been aware, that under the circumstances supposed by him, Odeffa too being closed against us by a Russian war, the island of Malta itself would be no better than a vast almshouse of 75,000 persons, exclusively of the British soldiers, all of whom must be regularly supplied with corn and salt meat from Great Britain or Ireland. The population of Malta and Gozo exceeds 100,000; while the food of all kinds produced on the two islands would barely suffice for one-fourth of that number. The deficiency is supplied by the growth and spinning of cotton, for which corn could not be substituted from the nature of the soil, or were it attempted,

would produce but a small proportion of the quantity which the cotton raised on the same fields and spun* into thread, enables the Maltese to purchase;—not to mention that the substitution of grain for cotton would leave half of the inhabitants without employment. As to live stock, it is quite out of the question, if we except the pigs and goats, which perform the office of scavengers in the streets of Valetta and the towns on the other side of the Porto Grande.

Against these latter arguments Sir A. Ball placed the following considerations. It had been long his conviction, that the Mediterranean squadron should be supplied by regular store-ships, the sole business of which should be that of carriers for the fleet. This he recommended as by far the most economic plan, in the first instance. Secondly, beyond any other it would secure a system and regularity in the arrival of supplies. And, lastly, it would conduce to the discipline of the navy, and prevent

* The Maltese cotton is naturally of a deep buff, or dusky orange colour, and, by the laws of the island, must be spun before it can be exported. I have heard it asserted by persons apparently well informed on the subject, that the raw material would fetch as high a price as the thread, weight for weight; the thread from its coarseness being applicable to few purposes. It is manufactured likewise for the use of the natives themselves into a coarse nankin, which never loses its colour by washing and is durable beyond any clothing I have ever known or heard of. The cotton seed is used as a food for the cattle that are not immediately wanted for the market: it is very nutritious, but changes the fat of the animal into a kind of suet, congealing quickly, and of an adhesive substance.

both ships and officers from being out of the way on any sudden emergence. If this system were introduced, the objections to Malta, from its great distance, and the like, would have little force. On the other hand, the objections to Minorca he deemed irremovable. The same disadvantages which attended the getting out of the harbour of Valetta, applied to vessels getting into Port Mahon; but while fifteen hundred or two thousand British troops might be safely entrusted with the preservation of Malta, the troops for the defence of Minorca must ever be in proportion to those which the enemy may be supposed likely to send against it. It is so little favoured by nature or by art, that the possessors stand merely on the level with the invaders. *Cæteris paribus*, if there were 12,000 of the enemy landed, there must be an equal number to repel them; nor could the garrison, or any part of it be spared for any sudden emergence without risk of losing the island. Previously to the battle of Marengo, the most earnest representations were made to the governor and commander at Minorca by the British admiral, who offered to take on himself the whole responsibility of the measure, if he would permit the troops at Minorca to join our allies. The governor felt himself compelled to refuse his assent. Doubtless, he acted wisely, for responsibility is not transferable. The fact is introduced in proof of the defenceless state of Minorca, and its constant liability to attack. If the Austrian army had stood in the same

relation to eight or nine thousand British soldiers at Malta, a single regiment would have precluded all alarms, as to the island itself, and the remainder have perhaps changed the destiny of Europe. What might not, almost I would say, what must not eight thousand Britons have accomplished at the battle of Marengo, nicely poised as the fortunes of the two armies are now known to have been? Minorca too is alone useful or desirable during a war, and on the supposition of a fleet off Toulon. The advantages of Malta are permanent and national. As a second Gibraltar, it must tend to secure Gibraltar itself; for if by the loss of that one place we could be excluded from the Mediterranean, it is difficult to say what sacrifices of blood and treasure the enemy would deem too high a price for its conquest. Whatever Malta may or may not be respecting Egypt, its high importance to the independence of Sicily cannot be doubted, or its advantages, as a central station, for any portion of our disposable force. Neither is the influence which it will enable us to exert on the Barbary powers to be wholly neglected. I shall only add, that during the plague at Gibraltar, Lord Nelson himself acknowledged that he began to see the possession of Malta in a different light.

Sir Alexander Ball looked forward to future contingencies as likely to increase the value of Malta to Great Britain. He foresaw that the whole of Italy would become a French province, and he knew that the French government had been long

intriguing on the coast of Barbary. The Dey of Algiers was believed to have accumulated a treasure of fifteen millions sterling, and Buonaparte had actually duped him into a treaty, by which the French were to be permitted to erect a fort on the very spot where the ancient Hippo stood, the choice between which and the Hellespont as the site of New Rome is said to have perplexed the judgment of Constantine. To this he added an additional point of connection with Russia, by means of Odessa, and on the supposition of a war in the Baltic, a still more interesting relation to Turkey, and the Morea, and the Greek islands. — It had been repeatedly signified to the British government, that from the Morea and the countries adjacent, a considerable supply of ship timber and naval stores might be obtained, such as would at least greatly lessen the pressure of a Russian war. The agents of France were in full activity in the Morea and the Greek islands, the possession of which by that government would augment the naval resources of the French to a degree of which few are aware, who have not made the present state of commerce of the Greeks an object of particular attention. In short, if the possession of Malta were advantageous to England solely as a convenient watch-tower, as a centre of intelligence, its importance would be undeniable.

Although these suggestions did not prevent the signing away of Malta at the peace of Amiens, they doubtless were not without effect, when the

ambition of Buonaparte had given a full and final answer to the grand question : can we remain in peace with France ? I have likewise reason to believe, that Sir Alexander Ball baffled by exposure an insidious proposal of the French government, during the negotiations that preceded the recommencement of the war—that the fortifications of Malta should be entirely dismantled, and the island left to its inhabitants. Without dwelling on the obvious inhumanity and flagitious injustice of exposing the Maltese to certain pillage and slavery from their old and inveterate enemies, the Moors, he showed that the plan would promote the interests of Buonaparte even more than his actual possession of the island, which France had no possible interest in desiring, except as the means of keeping it out of the hands of Great Britain.

But Sir Alexander Ball is no more. I still cling to the hope that I may yet be enabled to record his good deeds more fully and regularly ; that then, with a sense of comfort not without a subdued exultation, I may raise heaven-ward from his honoured tomb the glistening eye of a humble but ever grateful friend.



APPENDIX.

A.

Prospectus of The Friend, (extracted from a Letter to a Correspondent.)

IT is not unknown to you, that I have employed almost the whole of my life in acquiring, or endeavouring to acquire, useful knowledge by study, reflection, observation, and by cultivating the society of my superiors in intellect, both at home and in foreign countries. You know, too, that at different periods of my life I have not only planned, but collected the materials for, many works on various and important subjects; so many indeed, that the number of my unrealized schemes and the mass of my miscellaneous fragments have often furnished my friends with a subject of raillery, and sometimes of regret and reproof. Waiving the mention of all private and accidental hinderances, I am inclined to believe that this want of perseverance has been produced in the main by an over activity of thought, modified by a constitutional indolence, which made it more pleasant to me to continue acquiring, than to reduce what I had acquired to a regular form. Add, too, that almost

daily throwing off my notices or reflections in desultory fragments, I was still tempted onward by an increasing sense of the imperfection of my knowledge, and by the conviction that, in order fully to comprehend and develop any one subject, it was necessary that I should make myself master of some other, which again as regularly involved a third, and so on with an ever-widening horizon. Yet one habit, formed during long absences from those with whom I could converse with full sympathy, has been of advantage to me, — that of daily noting down in my memorandum or common place books both incidents and observations;—whatever had occurred to me from without, and all the flux and reflux of my mind within itself. The number of these notices and their tendency, miscellaneous as they were, to one common end—(*quid sumus et quid futuri gignimur*, what we are and what we are born to become; and thus from the end of our being to deduce its proper objects)—first encouraged me to undertake the weekly essay, of which you will consider this letter as the *prospectus*.

Not only did the plan seem to accord better than any other with the nature of my own mind, both in its strength and in its weakness; but, conscious that in upholding some principles both of taste and philosophy, adopted by the great men of Europe, from the middle of the fifteenth till toward the close of the seventeenth century, I must run counter to many prejudices of many of my readers, (for old faith is often modern heresy,) I perceived too in a periodical essay the most likely means of winning instead of forcing my way. The truth supposed on my side, the shock of the first day might be so far lessened by the reflections of succeeding days, as to

procure for my next week's essay a less hostile reception than it would have met with had it been only the next chapter of a present volume. I hoped to disarm the mind of those feelings, which preclude conviction by contempt, and, as it were, fling the door in the face of reasoning by a presumption of its absurdity. A motive too for honourable ambition was supplied by the fact, that every periodical paper of the kind now attempted, which had been conducted with zeal and ability, was not only well received at the time, but has become permanently, and in the best sense of the word, popular. By honourable ambition I mean the strong desire to be useful, aided by the wish to be generally acknowledged to have been so. As I feel myself actuated in no ordinary degree by this desire, so the hope of realizing it appears less and less presumptuous to me since I have received from men of highest rank and established character in the republic of letters, not only strong encouragements as to my own fitness for the undertaking, but likewise promises of support from their own stores.

The object of the *Friend*, briefly and generally expressed, is—to uphold those truths and those merits, which are founded in the nobler and permanent parts of our nature, against the caprices of fashion and such pleasures as either depend on transitory and accidental causes, or are pursued from less worthy impulses. The chief subjects of my own essays will be :

The true and sole ground of morality or virtue, as distinguished from prudence :

The origin and growth of moral impulses, as distinguished from external and immediate motives :

The necessary dependence of taste on moral impulses and habits, and the nature of taste (relatively to judg-

ment in general and to genius) defined, illustrated, and applied. Under this head I comprise the substance of the Lectures given, and intended to have been given, at the Royal Institution on the distinguished English poets, in illustration of the general principles of poetry ; together with suggestions concerning the affinity of the fine arts to each other, and the principles common to them all ; — architecture ; gardening ; dress ; music ; painting ; poetry :

The opening out of new objects of just admiration in our own language, and information as to the present state and past history of Swedish, Danish, German, and Italian literature,—to which, but as supplied by a friend, I may add the Spanish, Portuguese, and French—as far as the same has not been already given to English readers, or is not to be found in common French authors :

• Characters met with in real life ;—anecdotes and results of my own life and travels, as far as they are illustrative of general moral laws, and have no direct bearing on personal or immediate politics :

Education in its widest sense, private and national :

Sources of consolation to the afflicted in misfortune, or disease, or dejection of mind, from the exertion and right application of the reason, the imagination, and the moral sense ; and new sources of enjoyment opened out, or an attempt (as an illustrious friend once expressed the thought to me) to add sunshine to daylight, by making the happy more happy. In the words “ Dejection of mind ” I refer particularly to doubt or disbelief of the moral government of the world, and the grounds and arguments for the religious hopes of human nature.

Such are the chief subjects in the development of which I hope to realize, to a certain extent, the great object

of my essays. It will assuredly be my endeavour, by as much variety as is consistent with that object, to procure entertainment for my readers as well as instruction: yet I feel myself compelled to hazard the confession, that such of my readers as make the latter the paramount motive for their encouragement of the *Friend*, will receive the largest portion of the former. I have heard it said of a young lady,—“if you are told, before you see her, that she is handsome, you will think her ordinary; if that she is ordinary, you will think her handsome.” I may perhaps apply this remark to my own essays. If instruction and the increase of honourable motives and virtuous impulses be chiefly expected, there will, I would fain hope, be felt no deficiency of amusement; but I must submit to be thought dull by those who seek amusement only. The *Friend* will be distinguished from its celebrated predecessors, the *Spectator* and the like, as to its plan, chiefly by the greater length of the separate essays, by their closer connection with each other, and by the predominance of one object, and the common bearing of all to one end.

It would be superfluous to state, that I shall receive with gratitude any communications addressed to me: but it may be proper to say, that all remarks and criticisms in praise or dispraise of my contemporaries (to which, however, nothing but a strong sense of a moral interest will ever lead me) will be written by myself only; both because I cannot have the same certainty concerning the motives of others, and because I deem it fit, that such strictures should always be attended by the name of their author, and that one and the same person should be solely responsible for the insertion as well as composition of the same.

B.

Commencement of No. I.

IF it be usual with writers in general to find the first paragraph of their works that which has given them the most trouble with the least satisfaction, the Friend may be allowed to feel the difficulties and anxiety of a first introduction in a more than ordinary degree. He is embarrassed by the very circumstances that discriminate the plan and purposes of the present weekly paper from those of its periodical brethren, as well as from its more dignified literary relations, which come forth at once and in full growth from their parents. If it had been my ambition to have copied its whole scheme and fashion from the great founders of the race, the Tatler and Spectator, I should indeed have exposed my essays to a greater hazard of unkind comparison. An imperfect imitation is often felt as a contrast. On the other hand, however, the very names and descriptions of the fictitious characters, which I had proposed to assume in the course of my work, would have put me at once in possession of the stage; and my first act have opened with a procession of masks. Again, if I were composing one work on one given object, the same acquaintance with its grounds and bearings, which had authorized me to publish my opinions, would, with its principles or fundamental facts, have supplied me with my best and most appropriate commencement. More easy still would my task have been, had I planned the Friend chiefly as a vehicle for a weekly descant on public characters and

political parties. My perfect freedom from all warping influences; the distance which permitted a distinct view of the game, yet secured me from its passions; the liberty of the press; and its especial importance at the present period from whatever event or topic might happen to form the great interest of the day; in short, the *recipe* was ready to my hand, and it was framed so skillfully, and has been practised with such constant effect, that it would have been affectation to have deviated from it. For originality for its own sake merely is idle at the best, and sometimes monstrous. Excuse me, therefore, gentle reader! if borrowing from my title a right of anticipation, I avail myself of the privileges of a friend before I have earned them; and waiving the ceremony of a formal introduction, permit me to proceed at once to the subject, trite indeed and familiar as the first lessons of childhood; which yet must be the foundation of my future superstructure with all its ornaments, the hidden root of the tree, I am attempting to rear, with all its branches and boughs. But if from it I have deduced my strongest moral motives for this undertaking, it has at the same time been applied in suggesting the most formidable obstacle to my success,—as far, I mean, as my plan alone is concerned, and not the talents necessary for its completion.

Conclusions drawn from facts which subsist in perpetual flux, without definite place or fixed quantity, must always be liable to plausible objections, nay, often to unanswerable difficulties; and yet, having their foundation in uncorrupted feeling, are assented to by mankind at large, and in all ages, as undoubted truths. As our notions concerning them are almost equally obscure, so are our convictions almost equally vivid, with those of

our life and individuality. Regarded with awe as guiding principles by the founders of law and religion, they are the favourite objects of attack with mock philosophers, and the demagogues in church, state, and literature; and the denial of them has in all times, though at various intervals, formed heresies and systems, which, after their day of wonder, are regularly exploded, and again as regularly revived when they have re-acquired novelty by courtesy of oblivion.

Among these universal persuasions we must place the sense of a self-contradicting principle in our nature, or a disharmony in the different impulses that constitute it; — of a something which essentially distinguishes man both from all other animals that are known to exist, and from the idea of his own nature, or conception of the original man. In health and youth we may indeed connect the glow and buoyance of our bodily sensations with the words of a theory, and imagine that we hold it with a firm belief. The pleasurable heat which the blood or the breathing generates, the sense of external reality which comes with the strong grasp of the hand, or the vigorous tread of the foot, may indifferently become associated with the rich eloquence of a Shaftesbury, imposing on us man's possible perfections for his existing nature; or with the cheerless and harder impieties of a Hobbes, while cutting the Gordian knot he denies the reality of either vice or virtue, and explains away the mind's self-reproach into a distempered ignorance, an epidemic affection of the human nerves and their habits of motion.

“Vain wisdom all, and false philosophy!”

I shall hereafter endeavour to prove, how distinct and different the sensation of positiveness is from the sense

of certainty;—the turbulent heat of temporary fermentation from the mild warmth of essential life. Suffice it for the present to affirm, to declare it at least, as my own creed, that whatever humbles the heart, and forces the mind inward, whether it be sickness, or grief, or remorse, or the deep yearnings of love, [and there have been children of affliction for whom all these have met and made up one complex suffering,] in proportion as it acquaints us with the thing we are, renders us docile to the concurrent testimony of our fellow men in all ages and in all nations. From Pascal in his closet resting the arm, which supports his thoughtful brow, on a pile of demonstrations, to the poor pensive Indian that seeks the missionary in the American wilderness, the humiliated self-examinant feels that there is evil in our nature as well as good;—an evil and a good, for a just analogy to which he questions all other natures in vain. It is still the great definition of humanity, that we have a conscience, which no mechanic compost, no chemical combination of mere appetite, memory and understanding, can solve; which is indeed an element of our being;—a conscience, unrelenting yet not absolute; which we may stupify but cannot delude; which we may suspend but cannot annihilate; although we may perhaps find a treacherous counterfeit in the very quiet which we derive from its slumber, or its entrancement.

Of so mysterious a *phenomenon* we might expect a cause as mysterious. Accordingly, we find this [cause be it, or condition, or necessary accompaniment] involved and implied in the fact, which it alone can explain. For if our permanent consciousness did not reveal to us our free-agency, we should yet be obliged to deduce it, as a necessary inference, from the fact of our

conscience : or rejecting both the one and the other, as mere illusions of internal feelings, forfeit all power of thinking consistently with our actions, or acting consistently with our thought, for any single hour during our whole lives. But I am proceeding farther than I had wished or intended. It will be long ere I shall dare flatter myself that I have won the confidence of my reader sufficiently to require of him that effort of attention, which the regular establishment of this truth would require.

After the brief season of youthful hardihood, and the succeeding years of unceasing fluctuation, after long continued and patient study of the most celebrated works in the languages of ancient and modern Europe, in defence or denial of this prime article of human faith, which (save to the trifler or the worldling) no frequency of discussion can superannuate, I at length satisfied my own mind by arguments, which placed me on firm land. This one conviction, determined, as in a mould, the form and feature of my whole system in religion and morals, and even in literature. These arguments were not suggested to me by books, but forced on me by reflection on my own being, and observation of the ways of those about me, especially of little children. And as they had the power of fixing the same persuasion in some valuable minds, much interested, and not unversed in the controversy, and from the manner probably rather than the substance, appeared to them in some sort original—[for oldest reasons will put on an impressive semblance of novelty, if they have indeed been drawn from the fountain-head of genuine self-research]—and since the arguments are neither abstruse, nor dependant on a long chain of deductions, nor such as suppose previous habits

of metaphysical disquisition ; I shall deem it my duty to state them with what skill I can, at a fitting opportunity, though rather as the biographer of my own sentiments than a legislator of the opinions of other men.

At present, however, I give it merely as an article of my own faith, closely connected with all my hopes of melioration in man, and leading to the methods by which alone I hold any fundamental or permanent melioration practicable ;—that there is evil distinct from error and from pain, an evil in human nature which is not wholly grounded in the limitation of our understandings. And this, too, I believe to operate equally in subjects of taste, as in the higher concerns of morality. Were it my conviction, that our follies, vice, and misery, have their entire origin in miscalculation from ignorance, I should act irrationally in attempting other task than that of adding new lights to the science of moral arithmetic, or new facility to its acquirement. In other words, it would have been my worthy business to have set forth, if it were in my power, an improved system of book-keeping for the ledgers of calculating self-love. If, on the contrary, I believed our nature fettered to all its wretchedness of head and heart, by an absolute and innate necessity, at least by a necessity which no human power, no efforts of reason or eloquence could remove or lessen, [no, nor even prepare the way for such removal or diminution] ; I should then yield myself at once to the admonitions of one of my correspondents, [unless, indeed, it should better suit my humour to do nothing than nothings, *nihil quam nibili*,] and deem it even presumptuous to aim at other or higher object than that of amusing, during some ten minutes in every week, a small portion of the reading public.

Conclusion of No. I.

Previously to my ascent of Etna, as likewise of the Brocken in North Germany, I remember to have amused myself with examining the album or manuscript, presented to travellers at the first stage of the mountain, in which, on their return, their fore-runners had sometimes left their experience, and more often disclosed or betrayed their own characters. Something like this I have endeavoured to do relatively to my great predecessors in periodical literature, from the *Spectator* to the *Mirror*, or whatever later work of excellence there may be. But the distinction between my proposed plan and all and each of theirs, I must defer to a future essay. From all other works the *Friend* is sufficiently distinguished, either by the very form and intervals of its publication, or by its avowed exclusion of the events of the day, and of all personal politics.

For a detail of the principal subjects, which I have proposed to myself to treat in the course of this work, I must refer to the *Prospectus*, — printed at the end of this sheet. But I own I am anxious to explain myself more fully on the delicate subjects of religion and politics. Of the former perhaps it may, for the present, be enough to say that I have confidence in myself, that I shall neither directly nor indirectly attack its doctrines or mysteries, much less attempt basely to undermine them by allusion, or tale, or anecdote. What more I might dare promise of myself, I reserve for another occasion. Of politics, however, I have many motives to declare my intentions more explicitly. It is my object to refer men to principles in all things; in literature, in the fine arts, in morals, in legislation, in religion. Whatever,

therefore, of a politic nature may be reduced to general principles, necessarily, indeed, dependant on the circumstances of a nation internal and external, yet not especially connected with this year or the preceding — this I do not exclude from my scheme. Thinking it a sort of duty to place my readers in full possession, both of my opinions and the only method in which I can permit myself to recommend them, and aware, too, of many calumnious accusations, as well as gross misapprehensions of my political creed, I shall dedicate my second number entirely to the views, which a British subject, in the present state of his country, ought to entertain of its actual and existing constitution of government. If I can do no positive good, I may perhaps aid in preventing others from doing harm. But all intentional allusions to particular persons, all support of, or hostility to, particular parties or factions, I now and for ever utterly disclaim. My principles command this abstinence, my tranquillity requires it:—

Tranquillity! *thou* better name
Than all the family of fame, &c.

* * * * *

But I have transgressed a rule, which I had intended to have established for myself, that of never troubling my readers with my own verses:

*Ite hinc Camœnæ! vos quoque, ite, suaves,
Dulces Camœnæ! Nam (fatebimur verum)
Dulces fuistis: et tamen meas chartas
Revisitote; sed pudenter et raro.*

I shall, indeed, very rarely and cautiously, avail myself of this privilege. For long and early habits of exerting my intellect in metrical composition have not so enslaved me, but that for some years I have felt, and

deeply felt, that the poet's high functions were not my proper assignment ;—that many may be worthy to listen to the strains of Apollo, neighbours of the sacred choir, and able to discriminate, and feel, and love its genuine harmonies ; yet not therefore called to receive the harp in their own hands, and join in the concert. I am content and gratified, that Spenser, Shakespeare, Milton, have not been born in vain for me : and I feel it as a blessing, that even among my contemporaries I know one at least, who has been deemed worthy of the gift ; who has received the harp with reverence, and struck it with the hand of power.

C.

Commencement of No. II.

CONSCIOUS that I am about to deliver my sentiments on a subject of the utmost delicacy, to walk

*per ignes
Suppositos cineri dolose,*

I have been tempted by my fears to preface them with a motto of unusual length, from an authority equally respected by both of the opposite parties. I have selected it from an orator, whose eloquence has taken away for Englishmen all cause of humiliation from the names of Demosthenes and Cicero : from a statesman, who has left to our language a bequest of glory unrivalled, and all his own, in the keen-eyed, yet far-sighted genius, with which he has almost uniformly made the most original and profound general principles of poli-

tical wisdom, and even recondite laws of human passions, bear upon particular measures and events. While of the harangues of Pitt, Fox, and their elder compeers, on the most important occurrences, we retain a few unsatisfactory fragments alone, the very flies and weeds of Burke shine to us through the purest amber, imperishably enshrined, and valuable from the precious material of their embalmment. I have extracted the passage from that Burke whose latter exertions have rendered his works venerable, as oracular voices from the sepulchre of a patriarch, to the upholders of government and society in their existing state and order; but from a speech delivered by him while he was the most beloved, the proudest name with the more anxious friends of liberty; (I distinguish them in courtesy by the name of their own choice, not as implying any enmity to true freedom in the characters of their opponents;) while he was the darling of those, who, believing mankind to have been improved, are desirous to give to forms of government a similar progression.

From the same anxiety, I have been led to introduce my opinions on this most hazardous subject by a preface of a somewhat personal character. And though the title of my address is general, yet, I own, I direct myself more particularly to those among my readers, who, from various printed and unprinted calumnies, have judged most unfavourably of my political tenets; and to those, whose favour I have chanced to win in consequence of a similar, though not equal, mistake. To both I affirm, that the opinions and arguments I am about to detail have been the settled convictions of my mind for the last ten or twelve years, with some brief intervals of fluctuation, and those only in lesser points, and known only

to the companions of my fireside. From both and from all my readers I solicit a gracious attention to the following explanations ; first, on the congruity of this number with the general plan and object of the Friend, and secondly on the charge of arrogance, which may be adduced against the author for the freedom with which, in this number, and in others that will follow, on other subjects, he presumes to dissent from men of established reputation, or even to doubt of the justice with which the public laurel crown, as symbolical of the first class of genius and intellect, has been awarded to sundry writers since the Revolution, and permitted to wither around the brows of our elder benefactors, from Hooker to Sir Philip Sidney, and from Sir Philip Sidney to Jeremy Taylor and Stillingfleet.

First, then, as to the consistency of the subject of the following essay with the proposed plan of my work, let something be allowed to honest personal motives, a justifiable solicitude to stand well with my contemporaries in those points, in which I have remained unreplicated by my own conscience. *Des aliquid famæ.* A reason of far greater importance is derived from the well grounded complaint of sober minds, concerning the mode by which political opinions of greatest hazard have been, of late years, so often propagated. This evil cannot be described in more just and lively language than in the words of Paley, which, though by him applied to infidelity, hold equally true of the turbulent errors of political heresy. They are “ served up in every shape that is likely to allure, surprise, or beguile the imagination ; in a fable, a tale, a novel, a poem ; in interspersed and broken hints ; remote and oblique surmises ; in books of travels, of philosophy, of natural history ; in a word, in

any form, rather than the right one, that of a professed and regular disquisition."* Now, in claiming for the Friend a fair chance of unsuspected admission into the families of Christian believers and quiet subjects, I cannot but deem it incumbent on me to accompany my introduction with a full and fair statement of my own political system; — not that any considerable portion of my essays will be devoted to politics in any shape, for rarely shall I recur to them, except as far as they may happen to be involved in some point of private morality; but that the encouragers of this work may possess grounds of assurance, that no tenets of a different tendency from these I am preparing to state, will be met in it. I would fain hope, that even those persons to whose political opinions I may run counter, will not be displeased at seeing the possible objections to their creed calmly set forth by one who, equally with themselves, considers the love of true liberty as a part both of religion and morality, as a necessary condition of their general predominance, and ministering to the same blessed purposes. The development of my persuasions, relatively to religion in its great essentials, will occupy a following number, in which, and throughout these essays, my aim will be, seldom, indeed, to enter the temple of revelation, (much less of positive institution,) but to lead my readers to its threshold, and to remove the prejudices with which the august edifice may have been contemplated from ill chosen and unfriendly points of view.

But, independently of this motive, I deem the subject of politics, so treated as I intend to treat it, strictly congruous with my general plan. For it was and is my

* Moral and Polit. Philosophy, B. V. c. 9.—*Ed.*

prime object to refer men in all their actions, opinions, and even enjoyments to an appropriate rule, and to aid them with all the means I possess, by the knowledge of the facts on which such rule grounds itself. The rules of political prudence do, indeed, depend on local and temporary circumstances in a much greater degree than those of morality, or even those of taste. Still, however, the circumstances being known, the deductions obey the same law, and must be referred to the same arbiter. In a late summary reperusal of our more celebrated periodical essays, by the contemporaries of Addison and those of Johnson, it appeared to me that the objects of the writers were, either to lead the reader from gross enjoyments and boisterous amusements, by gradually familiarizing them with more quiet and refined pleasures; or to make the habits of domestic life and public demeanour more consistent with decorum and good sense, by laughing away the lesser follies and freaks of self-vexation, or to arm the yet virtuous mind with horror of the direr crimes and vices, by exemplifying their origin, progress, and results, in affecting tales and true or fictitious biography; or where, as in the *Rambler*, it is intended to strike a yet deeper note, to support the cause of religion and morality by eloquent declamation and dogmatic precept, such as may with propriety be addressed to those, who require to be awakened rather than convinced, whose conduct is incongruous with their own sober convictions; in short, to practical not speculative heretics. Revered for ever be the names of these great and good men! Immortal be their fame; and may love, and honour, and docility of heart in their readers constitute its essentials! Not without cruel injustice should I be accused or suspected of a wish to under-

rate their merits, because, in journeying toward the same end, I have chosen a different road. Not wantonly, however, have I ventured even on this variation. I have decided on it in consequence of all the observations which I have made on my fellow creatures, since I have been able to observe in calmness the present age, and to compare its *phænomena* with the best indications we possess of the character of the ages before us.

My time since earliest manhood has been pretty equally divided between deep retirement, with little other society than that of one family, and my library, and the occupations and intercourse of [comparatively at least] public life both abroad and in the British metropolis. But in fact the deepest retirement, in which a well educated Englishman of active feelings, and no misanthrope, can live at present, supposes few of the disadvantages and negations, which a similar place of residence would have involved a century past. Independently of the essential knowledge to be derived from books, children, housemates, and neighbours, however few and humble,—newspapers, their advertisements, speeches in parliament, law courts, and public meetings, reviews, magazines, obituaries, and [as affording occasional commentaries on all these] the diffusion of uniform opinions, behaviour and appearance, of fashions in things external and internal, have combined to diminish, and often to render evanescent, the distinctions between the enlightened inhabitants of the great city, and the scattered hamlet. From all the facts, however, that have occurred as subjects of reflection within the sphere of my experience, be they few or numerous, I have fully persuaded my own mind, that formerly men were worse than their principles, but that at present the principles

are worfe than the men. For the former half of the propofition I might, among a thoufand other more ferious and unpleafant proofs, appeal even to the Spectators and Tatlers. It would not be eafy, perhaps, to detect in them any great corruption or debafement of the main foundations of truth and goodnefs; yet a man—I will not fay of delicate mind and pure morals, but—of common good manners, who means to read an effay, which he has opened upon at hazard in thefe volumes to a mixed company, will find it neceffary to take a previous furvey of its contents. If ftronger illuftration be required, I would refer to one of Shadwell's comedies, in connection with its dedication to the Duchess of New-castle, encouraged as he fays, by the high delight with which her Grace had liftened to the author's private recitation of the manufcript in her clofet. A writer of the prefent day, who fhould dare addrefs fuch a compofition to a virtuous matron of high rank, would fecure general infamy, and run no fmall risk of Bridewell or the pillory. Why need I add the plays and poems of Dryden, contrafted with his ferious prefaces and declarations of his own religious and moral opinions? Why the little fuccefs, except among the heroes and heroines of fashionable life, of the two or three living writers of prurient love-odes [if I may be forgiven for thus profaning the word love] and novels, at once terrific and libidinous? Thefe gentlemen erred both in place and time, and have underftood the temper of their age and country as ill as the precepts of that Bible, which, notwithstanding the atrocious blafphemy of one of them, the great majority of their countrymen perufe with fafety to their morals, if not improvement.

The truth of the latter half of the propofition in its favourable part is evidenced by the general anxiety on

the subject of education, the solicitous attention paid to several late works on its general principles, and the unexpected sale of the very numerous large and small volumes, published for the use of parents and instructors, and for the children given or intrusted to their charge. The first ten or twelve leaves of our old almanack books, and the copper-plates of old ladies' magazines, and similar publications, will afford, in the fashions and head-dresses of our grandmothers, contrasted with the present simple ornaments of women in general, a less important, but not less striking elucidation of my meaning. The wide diffusion of moral information, in no slight degree owing to the volumes of our popular essayists, has undoubtedly been on the whole beneficent. But above all, the recent events, [say rather, tremendous explosions,] the thunder and earthquakes and deluge of the political world, have forced habits of great thoughtfulness on the minds of men; particularly in our own island, where the instruction has been acquired without the stupifying influences of terror or actual calamity. We have been compelled to acknowledge, [what our fathers would have perhaps called it want of liberality to assert,] the close connection between private libertinism and national subversion. To those familiar with the state and morals, and the ordinary subjects of after dinner conversation, at least, among the young men in Oxford and Cambridge, only twenty or twenty-five years back, I might with pleasure point out, in support of my thesis, the present state of our two universities, which has rather superseded, than been produced by, any additional vigilance or austerity of discipline.

The unwelcome remainder of the proposition, the "feet of iron and clay," the unsteadiness, or falsehood, or abasement of the principles, which are taught and re-

ceived by the existing generation, it is the chief purpose and general business of the Friend to examine, to evince, and [as far as my own forces extend, increased by the contingents which, I flatter myself, will be occasionally furnished by abler patrons of the same cause] to remedy or alleviate. That my efforts will effect little, I am fully conscious; but by no means admit, that little is to be effected. The squire of low degree may announce the approach of puissant knight, yea, the giant may even condescend to lift up the feeble dwarf, and permit it to blow the horn of defiance on his shoulders.

Principles, therefore, their subordination, their connection, and their application, in all the divisions of our duties and of our pleasures—this is my chapter of contents. May I not hope for a candid interpretation of my motive, if I again recur to the possible apprehension on the part of my readers, that the Friend

O'erlaid with black, staid wisdom's hue,

with eye fixed in abstruse research, and brow of perpetual wrinkle, is to frown away the light-hearted graces, and unproved pleasures; or invite his guests to a dinner of herbs in a hermit's cell; if I affirm, that my plan does not in itself exclude either impassioned style or interesting narrative, tale, or allegory, or anecdote; and that the defect will originate in my abilities, not in my wishes or efforts, if I fail to bring forward,

Due at *my* hour prepared
For dinner savoury fruits, of taste to please
True appetite—
In order, so contrived as not to mix
Tastes, not well join'd, inelegant, but bring
Taste after taste upheld with kindest change.*

* *Pr. Loft. V. 303. 333.—Ed.*

D.

No. V.

THE comparison of the English with the Anglo-American newspapers will best evince the difference between a lawless press, [lawless, at least, in practice and by connivance,] and a press at once protected and restrained by law.

Ibid.

Chrysippus, in one of his Stoical Aphorisms, presented by Cicero,* says:—Nature has given to the hog a soul instead of salt, in order to keep it from putrefying. This holds equally true of man considered as an animal. Modern physiologists have substituted the words vital power [*vis vitæ*] for that of soul, and not without good reason: for, from the effect we may fairly deduce the inherence of a power producing it, but are not entitled to hypostatize this power, that is, to affirm it to be an individual substance, any more than the steam in the steam engine, the power of gravitation in the watch, or the magnetic influence in the lodestone. If the machine consist of parts mutually dependant, as in the time-piece or the hog, we cannot dispart without destroying it: if otherwise, as in a mass of lodestone and in the *polypus*, the power is equally divisible with the substance. The most approved definition of a living substance is, that its vitality consists in the susceptibility

* *De Natura Deorum*, II. l. 64.—*Ed.*

of being acted upon by external stimulants, joined to the necessity of re-action, and in the due balance of this action and re-action, the healthy state of life consists. We must, however, further add the power of acquiring habits, and facilities by repetition. This being the general idea of life, is common to all living beings: but taken exclusively, it designates the lowest class, plants and plant-animals. An addition to the mechanism gives locomotion. A still costlier and more complex apparatus diversely organizes the impressions received from the external powers, that fall promiscuously on the whole surface. The light shines on the whole face, but it receives form and relation only in the eyes; in them it is organized. To these organs of sense we suppose, by analogy from our own experience, sensation attached, and these sensuous impressions acting on other parts of the machine framed for other stimulants included in the machine itself, namely, the organs of appetite; and these again working on the instruments of locomotion, and on those by which the external substances corresponding to the sensuous impressions can be acted upon, [the mouth, teeth, talons, and the like,] constitute our whole idea of the perfect animal. More than this Des Cartes denied to all other animals but man, and to man himself as an animal: for that this truly great man considered animals insensible, or rather insensitive, machines, though commonly asserted, and that in books of highest authority, is an error, and the charge was repelled with disdain by himself, in a letter to Dr. Henry More, which, if I mistake not, is annexed to the small edition of More's *Ethics*.

The strict analogy, however, between certain actions of sundry animals and those of mankind, forces upon us

the belief that they possess some share of a higher faculty; which, however closely united with life in one person, can yet never be educed out of the mere idea of vital power. Indeed, if we allow any force to the universal opinion, and almost instinct, concerning the difference between plants and animals, we must hold even sensation as a fresh power added to his *vis vitæ*, unless we would make an end of philosophy, by comprising all things in each thing, and thus denying that any one power of the universe can be affirmed to be itself and not another. However this may be, the understanding or regulative faculty is manifestly distinct from life and sensation; its junction being to take up the passive affections into distinct thought of the sense, according to its own essential forms.* These forms, however, as they are first awakened by impressions from the senses, so have they no substance or meaning unless in their application to objects of the senses: and if we would remove from them, by careful abstraction, all the influences and intermixtures of a yet far higher faculty [self-consciousness, for instance,] it would be difficult, if at all possible, to distinguish its functions from those of instinct, of which it would be no inapt definition, that it is a more

* Aristotle, the first systematic anatomist of the mind, constructed the first numeration table of these innate forms or faculties (not innate ideas or notions) under the names of Categories: which table, though both incomplete and erroneous, remains an unequivocal proof of his penetration and philosophical genius. The best and most orderly arrangement of the original forms of the understanding, the moulds as it were both of our notions and judgments concerning the notices of the senses, is that of quantity, quality, relation, and mode, each consisting of three kinds. There is but one possible way of making an enumeration of them interesting or even endurable to the general reader: the history of the origin of certain useful inventions in machinery in the minds of the inventors.

or less limited understanding without self-consciousness, or spontaneous origination. Besides this, the understanding with all its axioms of sense, its anticipations of apperception, and its analogies of experience, has no appropriate object, but the material world in relation to our worldly interests. The far-sighted prudence of man, and the more narrow, but at the same time far more certain and effectual, cunning of the fox, are both no other than a nobler substitute for salt, in order that the hog may not putrefy before its destined hour.

E.

No. XII.

He who taketh the side of justice maketh the land prosperous : he who withdraweth from the same is an accomplice in its destruction.

RABBI ASSI was sick, lay on his bed surrounded by his disciples, and prepared himself for death. His nephew came unto him, and found him weeping. "Wherefore weepest thou, Rabbi?" he asked. "Must not every look which thou castest back on thy past life, bring a thought of joy to thee? Hast thou not then sufficiently studied, not sufficiently taught the sacred law? Lo! thy disciples here are proofs of the contrary. Hast thou then been backward in practising the works of righteousness? Every man is satisfied that thou hast not. And thy humility was the crown of all thy virtues! Never wouldst thou suffer thyself to be elected the judge of the district, anxiously as the whole district wished it." "It is even this, my son," answered Rabbi Assi, "which now troubles me. I had it in my power

to exercise right and justice among the children of men, and out of mistaken humility, I did not avail myself thereof. Who so withdraweth himself from justice is an accomplice in the ruin of the land."

F.

No. XIV.

DURING my second term at Cambridge, I had for my own amusement commenced a work on the plan of the well known *Miseries of Human Life*, at least with the same title; for by its title only, and the pleasure expressed by all who have spoken to me of it, am I acquainted with that publication. But at the same time I had meant to add, as an appendix, a catalogue *raisonné* of the fights, incidents, and employments, that leave us better men than they found us; or, to use my original phrase, of the things that do a man's heart good. If the seventeen or eighteen years which have elapsed since that period, would enable me greatly to extend and diversify the former list, the latter, as more properly the offspring of experience and reflection, would be augmented in a still larger proportion. Among the *addenda* to this second catalogue I should rank foremost, a long winter evening devoted to the re-perusal of the letters of far-distant or deceased friends. I suppose the person so employed to be one, whose time is seldom at his own disposal, and that he finds himself alone in a quiet house, the other inmates of which are absent on some neighbourly visit. I have been led to this observation by the numerous letters (many of which had all the pleasure of novelty for me, joined with the more

tender charm of awakened recollection) from the Friend, with a flight sketch of whose character I have introduced the present number under the name, which he went by among his friends and familiars, of Satyrane,* the Idoloclast, or breaker of idols.

A few seasons ago, I made the tour of the northern counties with him and three other companions. His *extensive erudition, his energetic and all too subtle intellect*, the opulence of his imagination, and above all, his inexhaustible store of anecdotes, which always appeared to us the most interesting when of himself, and his passionate love of mountain imagery, which often gave an eloquence to his looks and made his very silence intelligible, will for ever endear the remembrance of that tour to the survivors. Various were our discussions, most often with him, but sometimes [when we had split our party for a few hours] concerning him and his opinions; not a few of which appeared, to some of us at least, sufficiently paradoxical, though there was nothing which he bore with less patience than the hearing them thus characterized. Many and various were our topics, often suggested by the objects and occurrences of the moment, and often occasioned by the absence of other interest. O Satyrane! who would not have lost the sense of time and fatigue in thy company? How often, after a walk of fifteen or twenty miles, on rough roads and through a dreary or uninteresting country, have we seen our proposed resting place with a sort of pleasant surprise, all joining in the same question—"Who would

* The attentive reader will of course see that Satyrane is the author himself, and that this extract contains one of the many sketches of his own character, scattered throughout his writings.

have thought we had walked so far?" And then, perhaps, we examined our watches, as if half in doubt, or perhaps to contrast the length of time which had thus slipped away from us, with our own little sense of its lapse. These discussions, and the marked difference of our several characters (though we were all old acquaintances, and, with one exception, all of us fellow-Cantabs) suggested to us the plan of a joint work, to be entitled, 'Travelling Conversations.' Since that time I have often renewed this scheme in my mind, and pleased myself with the thought of realizing it. Independently of the delightful recollections, the lively portraiture and inward music, which would enliven my own fancy during the composition, it appeared to me to possess the merit of harmonizing an indefinite variety of matter by that unity of interest, which would arise from the characters remaining the same throughout, while the tour itself would supply the means of introducing the most different topics by the most natural connections. We had agreed to call each other by the names of our walking sticks, each of which happened to be of a different wood; Satyrane, however, excepted, who was well pleased to be called among us by his old college name, and not displeased with his learned *agnomen*, when we used with mock solemnity to entreat a short reprieve for our prejudices from him, under the lofty title of 'Puissant and most redoubtable Idoloclastes.' I flatter myself that the readers of the Friend will consent to travel over the same road with the same fellow-tourist. High, indeed, will be my gratification, if they should hereafter think of the walk and talk with the Friend's Satyrane, Holly, Larch, Hickory and Sycamore, with a small portion of the delight with which they have ac-

accompanied the Spectator to his club, and made acquaintance with Will Honeycomb, and the inimitable Sir Roger de Coverley. From any imitation, indeed, I am precluded by the nature and object of my work; and for many reasons, the persons, whom I introduce, must be distinguished by their sentiments, their different kinds of information, and their different views of life and society, rather than by any prominent individuality of humour in their personal characters. What they were to myself they will be to my reader; glasses of different colours and various degrees of power, through which truth and error, happiness and misery, may be contemplated.

From his earliest use, Satyrane had derived his highest pleasures from the admiration of moral grandeur and intellectual energy; and, during the whole of his short life, he had a greater and more heartfelt delight in the superiority of other men to himself, than men in general derive from the belief of their own. His readiness to imagine a superiority where it did not exist, was, indeed, for many years, his predominant weakness. His pain from the perception of inferiority in others, whom he had heard spoken of with any respect, was unfeigned and involuntary, and perplexed him, as a something which he did not comprehend. In the child-like simplicity of his nature, he talked to all men as if they were, at least, his equals in knowledge and talents; and his familiars record many a whimsical anecdote, and many a ludicrous incident, connected with this habit of his of scattering the good seed on unreceiving soils. When he was at length compelled to see and acknowledge the true state of the morals and intellect of his contemporaries, his disappointment was severe, and his mind, always thoughtful, be-

came pensive and almost gloomy : for to love and sympathize with mankind was a necessity of his nature. Hence, as if he sought a refuge from his own sensibility, he attached himself to the most abstruse researches, and seemed to derive his purest delight from subjects that exercised the strength and subtlety of his understanding, without awakening the feelings of his heart. When I first knew him, and for many years after, this was all otherwise. The sun never shone on a more joyous being. The Letters of earliest date, which I possess of his, were written to a common friend, and contain the accounts of his first travels. That I may introduce him to my readers in his native and original character, I now place before them his first letter, written on his arrival at *Hamburgh*.* I have only to premise, that *Satyrane* was incapable of ridiculing a foreigner merely for speaking English imperfectly ; but the extravagant vanity that could prompt a man, so speaking and pronouncing, to pride himself on his excellence as a linguist is as honest a subject of light satire, as an old coquette, or as a beau of threescore and ten, exposing the infirmities of old age in a reel on his wedding-day.

* The Letter here alluded to was published in the author's "*Literary Life*."

G.

*Preliminary to No. XXI.**Ante quod est in me, postque ———*

* * * *

*Omnis habet geminas, hinc atque hinc, janua frontes,
 E quibus hæc populum spectat ; at illa larem.
 Utque sedens vester primi prope limina tecti
 Janitor egressus introitusque videt ;
 Sic ego ———.*

OVID.

† I HAVE always looked forward to the present number of *The Friend* as its first proper starting post ; for the twenty numbers preceding I regarded as a preparatory heat, in order to determine whether or no I should be admitted, as a candidate, on that longer course, on which alone the speed and strength of the racer can be fairly proved.

* * * *

I was not so ignorant of mankind as to expect that my essays would be found interesting in the hurry and struggle of active life. All the passions which are there at work it was my object to preclude : and I distinctly foresaw, that by rejecting all appeals to personal passions, and party spirit, and all interest grounded wholly on the cravings of curiosity, and the love of novelty for its own sake, I at the same time precluded three-fourths of the ordinary readers of periodical publications, whether reviews, magazines, or newspapers. I might, however,

* Fast. I. 114, 135, &c.—*Ed.*

† The following passages are extracted from an address by Mr. Coleridge to his subscribers, and to the readers of the *Friend* in general.—*Ed.*

find. dispersedly what I could not hope to meet with collectively. I thought it not improbable, that there might be individuals, scattered throughout the kingdom, to whom the very absence of such stimulants would prove a recommendation to the work; and that, when the existence of such a work was generally known, a sufficient number of persons, able and willing to patronise it, might gradually be collected.

* * * *

I ought to have made it a condition, that a notice of six weeks should be given of the intention to discontinue the work;—but this I neglected from unwise delicacy, an habitual turning away from all thoughts relating to money, and, from a self-flattering persuasion that those, who, after the perusal of my *Prospectus*, had determined on giving the work a trial, would be sensible of the difficulties it had to struggle with, and whether satisfied or not with its style of execution, yet for the earnest wish of the Friend, not only to please them, but to please them in such a way as might leave them permanently better pleased with themselves, would be disposed rather to lessen than increase them.

* * * *

Among other things of the kind, a person, signing himself “Carlyol,” has addressed a threatening and abusive letter to me from Dover. I shall not tell him that such an act was ungentlemanly, unmanly, and unchristian, for this would be to him the same “learned nonsense and unintelligible jargon” for which he abuses me; but some other points I may venture to press on his attention. First, that it was a lack of common honesty in him to write a letter with a fictitious signature, and not pay the postage: secondly, that it was injudicious to address the

letter to me, as the editor of the *Courier* is alone responsible for the appearance of the passages which have offended him, and the other admirers of Buonaparte in that paper : thirdly, that there is one branch of learning without which learning itself cannot be railed at with common decency, namely, spelling : and lastly, that unintelligibility is a very equivocal charge. It certainly may arise from the author, especially if he should chance to be deficient in that branch of erudition last mentioned ; but it may likewise, and often does, arise from the reader, and this from more than one cause. He may have an idiotic understanding, and what is far more common, as well as incomparably more lamentable, he may have an idiotic heart. To this last cause must we attribute the commission of such crimes as provoke the vengeance of the law, by men who cannot but have heard from the pulpit truths and warnings, which, though evident to their understandings, were, unhappily for them, religious nonsense and unintelligible jargon to their bad hearts. And I feel it my duty to press on my correspondent's reflection the undoubted fact, that a man may be quite fool enough to be a rogue, and yet not appear fool enough to save him from the legal consequences of his roguery.

Ibid.

DURING the composition of this last paragraph, I have been aware that I shall appear to have been talking arrogantly, and with an unwarrantable assumption of superiority ; but a moment's reflection will enable my reader to acquit me of this charge, as far as it is, or ought

* On thought and attention contained in Vol. I. Eff. 2.—*Ed.*

to be; a charge. He will recollect that I have been giving the history of my own mind; and that, if it had been my duty to believe, that the main obstacle to the success of my undertaking existed not in the minds of others, but in my own insufficiency and inferiority, I ought not to have undertaken it at all. To a sincere and sensible mind it cannot but be disgusting, to find an author writing on subjects, to the investigation of which he professes to have devoted the greater portion of his life, and yet appealing to all his readers promiscuously, as his full and competent judges, and thus soliciting their favour by a mock modesty, which either convicts him of gross hypocrisy, or the most absurd presumption. For what can be conceived at once more absurd and presumptuous, than for a man to write and publish books for the instruction of those who are wiser than himself, more learned, and more judicious? Humility, like all other virtues, must exist in harmony with truth. My heart bears me witness that I would gladly give up all the pleasures which I can ever derive from literary reputation, could I receive instead of them a deep conviction, that the *Friend* has failed in pleasing no one, whose own superiority had not rendered the essays tiresome, because superfluous. And why should that be deemed a mark of self-sufficiency in an author, which would be thought only common sense in a musician or a painter, namely, the supposition that he understands and can practise those arts, to which he has devoted his best faculties during life, in consequence of a particular predilection for them, better than the mass of mankind, who have given their time and thoughts to other pursuits? There is one species of presumption among authors which is truly hateful, and which betrays itself,

when writers, who, in their prefaces, have prostrated themselves before the superiority of their readers as supreme judges, will yet, in their works, pass judgments on Plato, Milton, Shakespeare, Spenser, and their compeers, in blank assertions and a peremptory *ipse-dixi*, and with a grossness of censure, which a sensible school-master would not apply to the exercises of the youths in his upper forms. I need no outward remembrances of my own inferiority, but I possess them on almost every shelf of my library; and the very book which I am now using as my writing desk (Lord Bacon's *Novum Organum*) inspires an awe and heartfelt humility, which I would not exchange for all the delight which Buonaparte can enjoy at the moment that his crowned courtiers hail him emperor of emperors, and lord paramount of the West.

As the week, which is to decide on the continuance of the Friend, coincides with the commencement of the new year, the present address has not inappropriately taken its character from the two-faced god to whom the first month is indebted for its name; it being in part retrospective, and in part prospective. Among the various reasons which Ovid, in the passage from which I have taken my motto, has made Janus himself assign for his bifront appearance, he has omitted the most obvious intention of the emblem, that of instructing his worshippers to commence the new year with a religious, as well as prudential, review of their own conduct, and its consequences during the past year: and thus to look onward to the year before them with wiser plans, and with strengthened or amended resolutions. I will apply this to my own conduct as far as it concerns the present publication; and having already sufficiently informed the

reader of the general plan which I had proposed to myself, I will now, with the same simplicity, communicate my own calm judgment on the manner in which that plan has been so far realized and the outline filled up. My first number bears marks of the effort and anxiety with which it was written, and is composed less happily than I could wish. It assuredly had not the cheerful and winning aspect, which a door-keeper, presenting the bill of fare, ought to possess. Its object, however, was so far answered, as it announced distinctly the fundamental position or grand postulate on which the whole superstructure, with all its supporting beams and pillars, was to rest. I call it a postulate, not only because I deferred the proofs, but because, in strictness, it was not susceptible of any proof from without. The sole possible question was—Is it, or is it not, a fact?—and for the answer every human being must be referred to his own consciousness.

* * * *

If man be a free agent, his good and evil must not be judged according to the nature of his outward actions, or the mere legality of his conduct, but by the final motive and intention of the mind. Now the final motive of an intelligent will is a principle: and consequently to refer the opinions of men to principles (that is to absolute and necessary, instead of secondary and contingent, grounds) is the best and only secure way of referring the feelings of men to their proper objects. In the union of both consists the perfection of the human character.

The same subject was illustrated in my second essay, and reasons assigned from the peculiar circumstances of the age, and the present state of the minds of men, for giving this particular direction to their serious studies,

instead of the more easy and attractive mode of instruction adapted by my illustrious predecessors in periodical literature. At the same time, being conscious how many authorities of recent, but for that reason more influential reputation I must of necessity contravene in the support and application of my principles, both in criticism and philosophy, I thought it requisite to state the true nature of presumption and arrogance, and thus, if it were possible, preclude the charge in cases where I had not committed the offence. The object of the next four numbers was to demonstrate the innoxiousness of truth, if only the conditions were preserved which the reason and conscience dictated ; to shew at large what those conditions were which ought to regulate the conduct of the individual in the communication of truth ; and by what principles the civil law ought to be governed in the punishment of libels. Throughout the whole of these numbers, and more especially in the latter two, I again, and again recalled the attention of the reader to the paramount importance of principles, alike for their moral and their intellectual, for their private and national, consequences ; the importance, I say, of principles of reason, as distinct from, and paramount to, the maxims of prudence, even for prudence' sake. Some of my readers will probably have seen this subject supported by other and additional arguments in my seventh letter, ' On the grounds of hope for a people warring against Armies,' published during the last month, in the *Courier*.

In the meantime I was aware, that in thus grounding my opinions in literature, morals and religion, I should frequently use the same or similar language as had been applied by Rousseau, the French physiocratic philosophers, and their followers in England, to the nature

and rightful origin of civil government. The remainder of my work, therefore, hitherto has been devoted to the purpose of averting this mistake, as far as I have not been compelled by the general taste of my readers to interrupt the systematic progress of the plan by essays of a lighter kind, or which at least required a less effort of attention. In truth, since my twelfth number, I have not had courage to renew any subject which did require attention. The way to be admired is to tell the reader what he knew before, but clothed in a statelier phraseology, and embodied in apt and lively illustrations. To attempt to make a man wiser is of necessity to remind him of his ignorance, and in the majority of instances, the pain actually felt is so much greater than the pleasure anticipated, that it is natural that men should attempt to shelter themselves from it by contempt or neglect. For a living writer is yet *sub judice*: and if we cannot follow his conceptions or enter into his feelings, it is more consoling to our pride, as well as more agreeable to our indolence, to consider him as lost beneath, than as soaring out of our sight above us. *Itaque id agitur, ut ignorantia etiam ab ignominia liberetur.* Happy is that man, who can truly say, with Giordano Bruno, and whose circumstances at the same time permit him to act on the sublime feeling;—

*Procedat nudus, quem non ornant nubila,
Sol : non conveniunt quadrupedum phaleræ
Humano dorso. Porro veri species
Quæsitæ, inventæ, et patefactæ, me efferat.
Etsi nullus intelligat,
Si cum natura sapio et sub numine,
Id vere plusquam satis est.*

Should the number of subscribers remaining on my list be sufficient barely to pay the expences of the pub-

lication, I shall assuredly proceed in the present form, at least till I have concluded all the subjects which have been left imperfect in the preceding essays. And this, as far as I can at present calculate, will extend the present volume to the twenty-eighth or perhaps thirtieth number. The first place will be given to ‘Fragments and sketches of the life of the late Admiral Sir Alexander Ball.’ I shall next finish the important subject left incomplete at the ninth number, and demonstrate that despotism and barbarism are the natural result of a national attempt to realize anti-feudalism, or the system of philosophical jacobinism. This position will be illustrated and exemplified at each step by the present state of France; and the essay will conclude with a detailed analysis of the character of Buonaparte, promised by the author so many years ago in the *Morning Post*, as a companion to the character of Mr. Pitt, which I have been requested by men of the highest reputation in the philosophical and literary world, to republish in a more permanent form. In the third place, I shall conduct the subject of taxation to a conclusion, my essay on which has been grossly misunderstood. These misconceptions and misrepresentations I shall use my best efforts to remove; and then develop the influences of taxation and a national debt, on the foreign trade of Great Britain: and lastly, [the only mournful part of the tale] on the principles and intellectual habits of the country. And the volume, whether it be destined to stand alone or as the first of a series, will conclude with a philosophical examination of the British constitution in all its branches, separately and collectively. To the next, or twenty-first number, I shall annex a note of explanation requested by many intelligent readers, concern-

ing my use of the words 'reason' and 'understanding, as far as is requisite for the full comprehension of the political essays from the seventh to the eleventh numbers. But as I am not likely to receive back my list of subscribers from London within less than ten days, and must till then remain ignorant of the names of those who may have given orders for the discontinuance of the *Friend*, I am obliged to suspend the publication for one week. I cannot conclude this address without expressions of gratitude to those who have written me letters of encouragement and respect; but at the same time entreat, that in their friendly efforts to serve the work by procuring new names for it, they will apply to such only as, they have cause to believe, will be actually pleased with a work of this kind. Such only can be of real advantage to the *Friend*: and even if it were otherwise, he ought not to wish it. An author's success should always depend on feelings inspired exclusively by his writings, and on the sense of their having been useful to the person who recommends them. On this supposition, and on this only, such recommendation becomes a duty.

Ibid.

No. XXI.

AS to myself, and my own present attempt to record the life and character of the late Admiral Sir Alexander Ball, I have already stated that I consider myself as debarred from all circumstances, not appertaining to his conduct or character as a public functionary that involve the names of the living for good or for evil. What-

ever facts and incidents I relate of a private nature, must for the most part concern Sir Alexander Ball exclusively, and as an insulated individual. But I needed not this restraint. It will be enough for me, still as I write, to recollect the form and character of Sir Alexander Ball himself, to represent to my own feelings the inward contempt, with which he would have abstracted his mind from worthless anecdotes and petty personalities;—a contempt rising into indignation, if ever an illustrious name were used as the thread to string them upon. If this recollection be my Socratic demon to warn and to check me, I shall on the other hand derive encouragement from the remembrance of the tender patience, the sweet gentleness, with which he was wont to tolerate the tediousness of well meaning men; and the inexhaustible attention, the unfeigned interest, with which he would listen for hours where the conversation appealed to reason, and like the bee made honey while it murmured.

H.

No. XXII.

TO the doctrine of retribution after death the philosopher made the following objection. “When the soul is disunited from the body, to which will belong the guilt of the offences committed during life? Certainly not to the body; for this, when the soul takes its departure, lies like a clod of earth, and without the soul would never have been capable of offending: and as little would the soul have defiled itself with sin but for its union with the flesh. Which of the two then is the proper object of the divine justice?” “God’s wis-

dom only," answered the Rabbi, "fully comprehends the way of his justice. Yet the mortal may without offence, if with humility, strive to render the same intelligible to himself and his fellows. A householder had in his fruit garden two servants, the one lame and the other blind. Yonder, said the lame man to the blind, on those trees I see most delicious fruit hang, take me on thy shoulders and we will pluck thereof. This they did, and thus robbed their benefactor who had maintained them, as unprofitable servants, out of his mere goodness and compassion. The master discovered the theft, and called the two ingrates to account. Each threw off the blame from himself, the one urging in his defence his incapability of seeing the fruit, and the other the want of power to get at it. What did the master of the house do? He placed the lame man upon the blind, and punished them in the same posture in which they had committed the offence. So will the Judge of this world do with the soul and body of man."

THE END.

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